An Intensive 24 Session Journey Equipping You for a Lifetime of Discipleship!



Course Workbook



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Quick Bio:



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Jason brings a diverse background of athletics, finance, Christian studies, executive life coaching, wisdom and leadership to people and organizations with whom he works. He is a sought after speaker, seminar leader, life coach, and consultant. He has experience in Church planting, serving as the lead pastor in two church plants, and mentoring and consulting with church planters. In addition, he served on the staff of Stanwich Congregational Church in Greenwich, Connecticut for six years. During this time he developed the Omega seminar series and his life coaching ministry, which the church has commissioned him to share beyond its own walls.

Jason received a Masters of Divinity degree from Southern Theological Seminary, and currently is completing his Doctorate in Christian Leadership at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary. He received a B.A. in Business Economics and Organizational Behavior and Management from Brown University, where he was captain, pre-season All-American, and all-Ivy team member of the football team. He is also a national qualifier and Brown University school record holder in the discus.

Jason is a co-founder and partner of E Pluribus Partners, a Greenwich, Connecticut based think tank and consulting firm focused on helping organizations create engaging work environments. He serves as a consultant and life coach to many corporate executives and pastors, helping them lead their own lives and create engaging organizations. Jason is a contributing author to "What Managers Say, What Employees Hear, Connecting with Your Front Line (So They'll Connect with Customers)." He is also a co-author of "Fired Up or Burned Out – How to Reignite Your Team's Passion, Creativity, and Productivity."

Jason's wife Jen is also a graduate of Brown University with the B.A. in Psychology, as well as Boston University with a Masters of Social Work. She is active in several ministries, especially those relating to youth and families. Jason and Jen have four children. OMEGA Course: An Intensive 24 Session Journey Equipping You for a Lifetime of Discipleship!

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The 18 Natural Laws, Identity Roles Paradigm, P.R.E.P.², Life Focus Process, 7 G's © 2008, Life Spring Network, Inc.

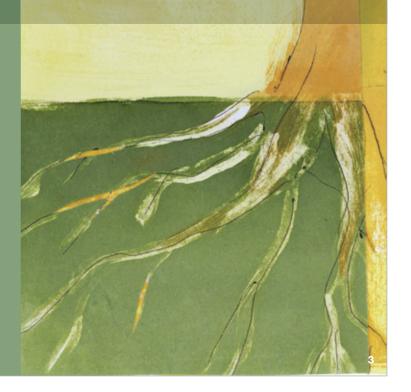
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Welcome!

Welcome to Omega! Omega is a 24 Session Journey, Equipping You for a Lifetime of Discipleship! Jesus said, "I am the Alpha and the Omega…" (Revelation 1:8). In essence, He was saying "I am the beginning and the end." Therefore, as developing disciples of Christ, we begin this journey with the end in mind: that end is the person of Jesus – the OMEGA (Ω)!

What to Expect

to r

- An intensive introduction and overview of the Christian faith which will equip you for a lifetime of discipleship.
- A Life Stewardship perspective and a Biblical worldview through 18 laws that serve as guideposts for the journey.
- A better understanding of how to focus your life and the lives of others whom you are trying to guide in their faith through the Life Focus Process.
- Clarity on God's Mission for our lives including His Vision, Values, Priorities and Identity Roles.
- Understanding and motivation for further adult education and transformation in every aspect of the Christian faith.
- The foundation for a lifestyle of mentoring and a personalized discipleship journey.
- Practical instruction on how to live your faith through focusing your time and life management based on Biblical principles and wisdom.

This Workbook

You will use this workbook during each session of the Omega Course. It will serve as the road map for your journey and will guide you along the way. Within these pages, you have much of the material that makes up the Omega Course. We've also added space for you to jot down your personal notes, either as reminders of something that stood out or any additional material that your trainer provides. At the end of each session, you'll find discussion questions that help you process the material. The best way to do this is in conjunction with others – either in a small group or with a mentor or both. This will enable you to receive feedback, gain perspective, and dig deeper into what God is doing in your life.

The Personal Development Guide

Between sessions, the Personal Development Guide will take you deeper into the Scriptures through daily devotionals and homework which focuses your Personal Development Plan. You know the rule: "You get out what you put in!" We encourage you to make room in your week to include this vital part of the course. It won't be the same without it!

Tools for the Journey

Along the way you will become well acquainted with some tools that will help you navigate your journey. We will introduce them here.

The Life Focus Process[™]



Clarify God's Mission: 12 Sessions Commit to Transformation: 4 Sessions Know Thyself: 4 Sessions Chart the Course: 2 Sessions Stay the Course: 2 Sessions



OMEGA

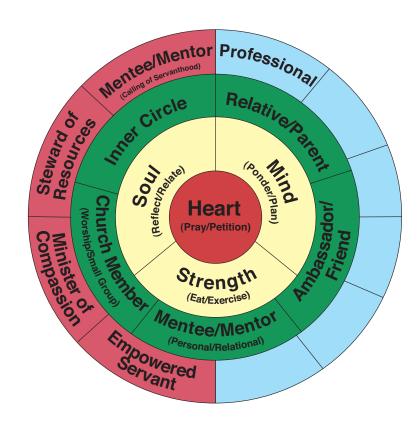
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The 18 Natural Laws of Life Stewardship



Natural Laws are fundamental patterns of nature and life that revelation, human experience and testing have shown to be valid. They describe things as they really are, as opposed to how we think they are or how we wish they were. A natural law is a law that cannot be repealed.

Identity Roles Diagram[™]



The first twelve sessions of Omega will explore Life Spring Network's Identity Roles Diagram. Through examining roles in three different categories of our identity in Christ, we gain a holistic perspective of what new life in Christ was designed to be.

Not Just Another Program

Omega is...

An Intensive 24 Session Journey Equipping You for a Lifetime of Discipleship!

Let's take a look at what that means:

"An Intensive..."

Omega is just that: intensive. As a "boot camp" of life coaching, you will be exposed to a big picture view of the life of discipleship and be invited to be trained in righteousness.

"....24 Session...."

Each of the twenty four sessions of the Omega Course can be a stand-alone seminar. Put together, each session builds on the previous session(s) to provide a map with which you can explore, discover and implement God's mission for your life.

"....Journey..."

The life of discipleship is a journey. You will need to refer back to the map during the different seasons of your life. Additionally, we have many participants who choose to take the course more than one time to get to the deeper levels of what God is doing in them through their Omega Experience.

"....Equipping You...."

Omega will equip you with a great toolbox of models, paradigms and frameworks with which to seek His guidance and power as you get "on mission" with God.

"...for a Lifetime of Discipleship!"

A lifetime of focused discipleship becomes possible as you enter into a lifestyle of mentoring that will help to keep you on track and growing...for a lifetime. By completing your personal development plan and using it as a regular mentoring and recalibration tool to discern God's will for your life, you will learn how to seek God's mission, engage His transformational work in your life and integrate Spiritually discerned disciplines that will facilitate your training in righteousness.



Maximizing Your Journey

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In order to maximize your Omega Experience, we recommend that you immerse yourself in the experience in the following ways:

- 1. Commit to journeying through the course in the allotted time, whether at a live site or with our video or audio resources.
- 2. Complement your journey through the course by spending time with the Omega Personal Development Guide each week.
- 3. Get the course on DVD, CD, or MP3 and review what you are learning. This will give you an opportunity to slow down the sections that you find personally challenging or intriguing.
- 4. Form or join a weekly Omega Small Group that will help you process the material and offer one another encouragement and accountability as you journey through the material together.
- 5. Invite someone to mentor you once a week while you are taking the course to help you to seek God, discern what the Spirit is saying to you, and encourage you as you proceed through the Life Focus Process.
- 6. Set aside a day or more each week during your journey to fast, pray and listen for God's guidance in your life. Record your reflections on these times in your Omega Personal Development Guide.
- 7. Visit the website to stay updated on the latest Life Spring Network News and Events. Check out recommended resources, and connect with other Omega participants from all over the world!

OMEGA Covenant Commitment

Life Spring Network

I,	, commit to seeking God's miss
	guidance for my life over the course of my journey through Omega.
I unc	lerstand that this is a C.O.R.E. decision to:
se a. b. c. d.	commit to the journey and my group by staying current with the weel ssion, including: Attending each of the live sessions at my Omega site, or Watching the course on DVD, by myself or with my small group, or Listening to the teachings on CD, or Watching the course on-line at www.lifespringnetwork.org If applicable, attend the retreat days in my region or watch these
2 D	sessions on DVD and work through the exercises on my own
a.	e <u>O</u> pen to grow by: Inviting the input and training of God through others in my group a through mentors that I will invite to help me along the way Taking notes in my workbook and completing the homework for ea session in my Omega Personal Development Guide
a.	elate to the group by: Participating in the small and large group discussions and interacting with one another outside of the course Opening my life up to the group that I am journeying through the course with and protecting the confidences of those within my group
4. <u>E</u> i	nter into Scripture by:
	Working back through the Scriptures and paradigms in each session Processing each session deeper by working through the three daily devotionals for each session in the Omega Personal Development G
Signe	ed
We	recommend that you engage in this journey in community.
Who	o are some people who will walk with you in covenant commun
thro	ugh this journey? Write their names below.



	Introduction
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In this session participants will:

Cognitive (Knowing Objectives)

• Gain a more complete understanding of the Biblical Principle of Stewardship.

Affective (Feeling Objectives)

• Be assured of God's perfect provision for our lives.

Behavioral (Doing Objectives)

• Spend time this week tracking our time and reflecting on the concept of Life Stewardship.

Existential (Lifelong Objectives)

• Learn how to live as a Steward in God's Kingdom by becoming a Fully Devoted Follower of Christ.







Stewarding Life

Life Focus Process Level 1: Clarifying God's Mission for Our Lives



Reflective Question:

What first comes to mind

when you hear the term

"stewardship?"



Clarify God's Mission for Our Lives Knowledge of His Vision, Priorities, Values and Identity Roles

Law 1: The Law of Stewardship

Life is a gift of time that we are responsible to steward with the decisions that we make until we die. [1 Peter 4:1-5; Psalm 90:12; 1 Corinthians 4:1-5]

1 Peter 4:1-5

"Therefore, since Christ suffered in his body, arm yourselves also with the same attitude, because he who has suffered in his body is done with sin. ²As a result, he does not live the rest of his earthly life for evil human desires, but rather for the will of God. ³ For you have spent enough time in the past doing what pagans choose to do – living in debauchery, lust, drunkenness, orgies, carousing and detestable idolatry. ⁴ They think it strange that you do not plunge with them into the same flood of dissipation, and they heap abuse on you. ⁵ But they will have to give account to him who is ready to judge the living and the dead." OMEGA

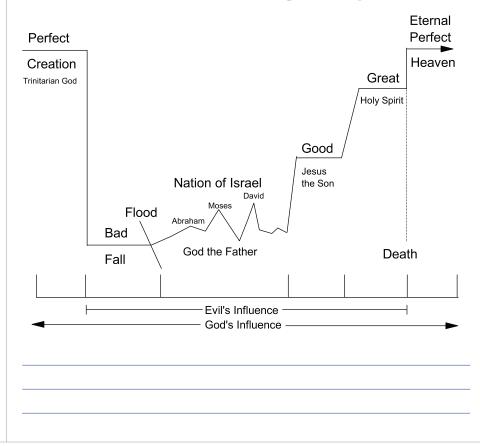
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Psalm 90:12

"Teach us to number our days aright, that we may gain a heart of wisdom."

1 Corinthians 4:1-5

"So then, men ought to regard us as servants of Christ and as those entrusted with the secret things of God. ² Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful. ³ I care very little if I am judged by you or by any human court; indeed, I do not even judge myself. ⁴ My conscience is clear, but that does not make me innocent. It is the Lord who judges me. ⁵ Therefore judge nothing before the appointed time; wait till the Lord comes. He will bring to light what is hidden in darkness and will expose the motives of men's hearts. At that time each will receive his praise from God."



God and Man Through History

Creation

In the Beginning, God created us in His image (Father, Son and Holy Spirit) and He declared that we were "very good." Humankind is the pinnacle of creation. As long as we knew only the will of God, our relationship with God was perfect. We were experiencing and expressing love perfectly!

The Fall and the Flood

When Satan entered the picture and offered us an opposing will to follow, we chose to disobey God. Consequently, we fell from the perfect relationship status that we had enjoyed with God. We found ourselves in a bad state, separated from God and tempted by the evil one to behave in destructive ways.

God Fathers a Nation

After the flood, God began to build a people who would seek Him. His plan was to use this nation to retrain the whole world how to seek God! It was during this season that God restored one aspect of life that was lost in the Fall. He gave us His law which restored His guidance to our lives. As we sought after God and followed His Guidance for our lives, we re-entered His blessing and began learning how to experience and express love again, God's way. Unfortunately, as we learn in the New Testament, the Law was also given to show us that we can't follow the guidance of God without the power of God. Therefore, our relationship with God during this season of history is very much like children learning how to love from their mother or father who is training them in righteousness. It was during this season that we related to God primarily as our Father, but we never broke out of the bad state into good, we only experienced better levels of bad and spurts of growth toward righteousness. Some people became God-fearing and God-following men and women, but on the whole the nation was still lost and in need of a Savior.

"The greatest challenge the church faces today is to be authentic disciples of Jesus." – Dallas Willard



"Jesus Christ did not come into this world to make bad people good; he came into this world to make dead people live." – Lee Stroebel

Arrival of Jesus the Son

Then God sent His only Son Jesus to be our Savior, pay the debt that we owe because of our sin, and show us how to live as our Lord! For those of us who accept His payment for our sins, God no longer holds our sins against us, and our relationship with God moves from bad to good. Unfortunately, most Christians' journey of faith ends right here, but this is not the end of the story, because God sends the Holy Spirit to empower us to experience and express the love of God in a supernatural way. This only happens when we are living in and through His strength!

God Sends His Spirit

When we live in and through the power of the Holy Spirit, we move from good to great! This reconnects us with the other aspect of life that was lost at the Fall: the Power of God. Now that we live in the season of the Spirit, bad and good are not good enough! Greatness is being offered to all who will bend their knee in obedience to God the Father, receive Jesus as their Savior and Lord, and surrender to the power of the Holy Spirit to guide and empower their lives. This is what is possible for us, but it is not all there is.

Our Eternal Dwelling

Those who die connected to God (Father, Son and Holy Spirit) will be restored to the perfect unhindered relationship that we experienced with God before the Fall. One significant difference from our previous perfect state in the garden is that this time it is a permanent state of perfectly experiencing and expressing love. It is permanent because we chose to love and follow God during our life on Earth. Upon death God purifies and perfects our will to do the will of the Father, and since there isn't any influence of the evil one beyond death, we perfectly experience and express love forever. This is His Story! The question is how do we respond to what He has done and what kind of life experience do we want to choose for ourselves?

The World's thinking is "NOW!"

It's all around us: fast food, the Internet, liposuction...do it now, get it now and worry about the consequences later. For whatever reason, the dollars we have, the amount of "stuff" we own, or the power we can wield still "wows" people. When we "number our days" according to the world's way of doing things, we get it wrong...way wrong. It's time to start dreaming a new dream: God's dream for your life.

Matthew 6:19-21

"Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. ²⁰ But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹ For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."

God's Guidance is for the Long Haul

God's perspective on life stands the test of time. He wants us to have a long-term view on life, and He wants us to have our eyes on the real prize – which is eternal life with Him. Through the Holy Spirit we can experience connection and intimacy with Him. And through that relationship, He can use us to help others. We're part of God's Plan A: the Church. When we're rightly connected to Him, ordering our days correctly and gaining wisdom about how He wants us to live, life just works.

"Much violence is based on the illusion that life is a property to be defended and not to be shared." – Henri Nouwen



For more resources, thoughts, and discussion about this session, please visit www.lifespringnetwork.org

Matthew 6:33-34

"But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. ³⁴ Therefore do not worry about tomorrow for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own."

Becoming a Fully Devoted Follower

We must die to our desires

When we seek God with all of our hearts, and devote our lives to Him, He is able to work in and through us. But we must die to self-leadership and seek God's plans for us if we are going to experience abundant life.

God begins transforming us

God wants to renew our heart, soul, mind and strength. When He does this, how we relate and what we do will be transformed as well. We become new creatures with new devotion, priorities and identities.

2 Corinthians 5:17

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come."

Experiencing the Kairos of God

The Greeks used several words to correspond with the English word for "time."

The first word is "Chronos." This means measured time. It denotes the minute by minute and moment-by-moment experience of time. As Jeff Caliguire says in his book *Shifting into High Gear*, "Some of us feel constrained by it. It makes us feel anxious. We try to manage it or

Reflective Question:

When do you most feel the tension between your desires and God's desires for you?

"An excellent way to test our values is to observe what we do when we don't have anything to do: how we spend our leisure time and how we spend our extra money." – Eugene Peterson

Reflective Question:

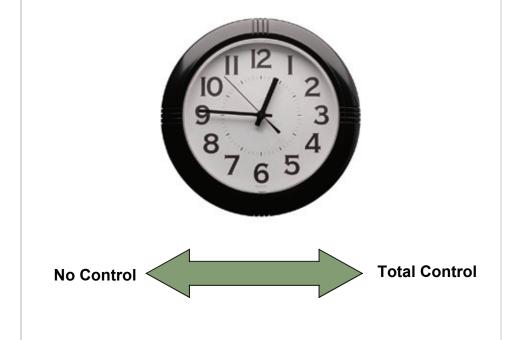
Whose time-table are you on?

control it. There never seems to be enough of it and when it is gone, it is gone."

The second word is "Kairos." Kairos can be defined as the fullness of time. Caliguire continues, "It's the present, time without limit, the kind of time God inhabits: not dragged to the next thing or too busy to notice. Fully there, alive in the now!"¹

Chronos = Human time Kairos = God time

The Issue of Control





Summary

In this session we discussed:

- Life Stewardship
- Law 1: The Law of Stewardship
- LFP Level 1: Clarifying God's Mission for Our Lives

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Discussion and Reflection Questions

1. The Law of Stewardship: What are the implications of this Law for your life?

2. What stood out to you most as we looked at God and Man Through History?

3. What does it means to you to live a truly Trinitarian faith?

4. Do you find it hard to patiently obey God and invest your life for the long haul (eternity) according to His desires for us?

5. Describe the battle that rages inside of you between doing your will and doing the will of the Father.

6. How do you understand the difference between Chronos and Kairos? How would you explain this difference to a friend of yours?

7. Which Scriptures stood out to you and why?



In this session participants will:

Cognitive (Knowing Objectives)

• Become familiar with the components of God's Mission for Our Lives and how God's Priorities meet our human needs perfectly.

Affective (Feeling Objectives)

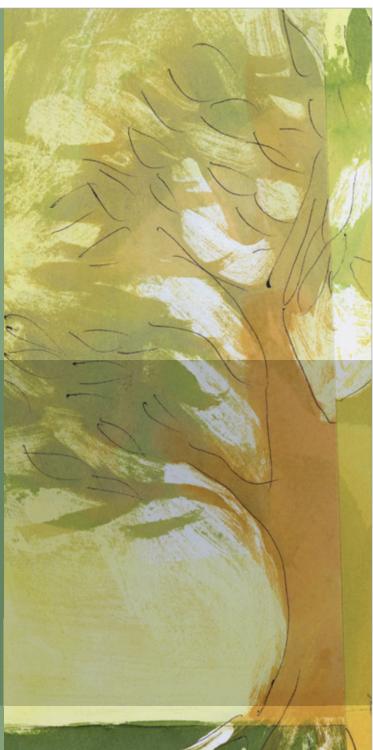
• Be encouraged to get "On Mission" with God.

Behavioral (Doing Objectives)

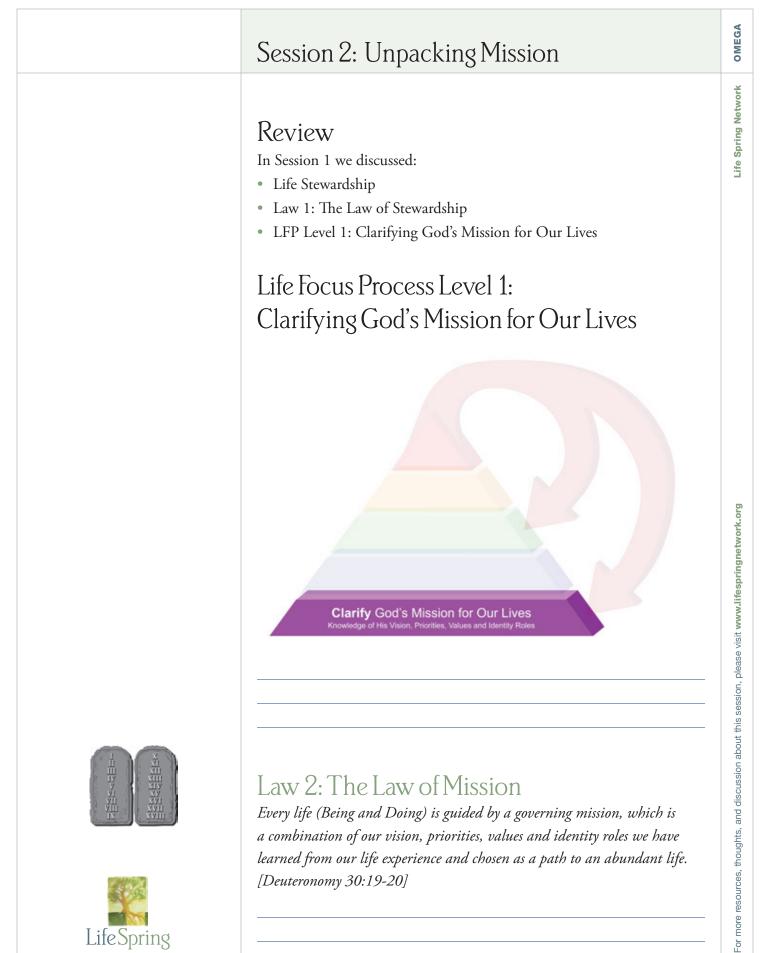
 Evaluate our current allocation of time and make adjustments according to God's Vision and Priorities for our lives.

Existential (Lifelong Objectives)

• Be cognizant of God's Promptings and make changes to re-align our lives with His Vision and Priorities.





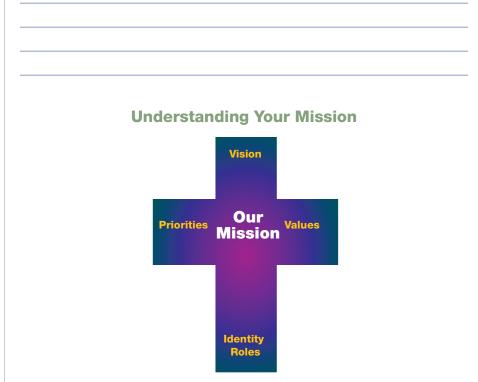




learned from our life experience and chosen as a path to an abundant life. [Deuteronomy 30:19-20]

Mission: Our Internal Compass

Each of us has a mission that we plan to carry out each day. It may be conscious, it may be unconscious. However, it's the mission that we believe will bring us what we perceive to be the abundant life. When our feet hit the floor in the morning, we have an internal compass that is bent toward accomplishing that mission. If we take time to dissect it, we will see that it is comprised of our vision, priorities, values, and identity roles. Our understanding of these has been influenced by our upbringing, our environment, and our life experiences. Some of this influence may be good; however, some of it may not be so good. Omega is designed to give you the space and time you need with God to examine some of these issues and get your internal compass moving in the right direction: God's!



We will take a look at four aspects of God's Mission for our lives: His Vision, Priorities, Values, and Identity Roles. Together they combine to create a mission that guides our lives.

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God's Mission for Our Lives

Connecting in real loving Relationship with God through Jesus **Christ** in the Power of the Holy Spirit, with others in contagious Christian **Community**, and with our **Calling** of Servanthood in the World.

Deuteronomy 30:19-20

"This day I call heaven and earth as witnesses against you that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live ²⁰ and that you may love the Lord your God, listen to his voice, and hold fast to him. For the Lord is your life, and he will give you many years in the land he swore to give to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob."

God's Mission for Our Lives:

Vision Priorities Values Identity Roles



God's Mission for Our Lives: VISION

Our Vision of God

Our vision of God affects our vision of what we think life is all about and how we are to live. Oftentimes we aren't able to visualize the way God really is and how He truly desires to relate to us.

God's Vision for Our Lives: To Experience and Express Love

Love is who God is. It is the most important part of life. Everything in the Bible is given to us to show us how to love God and one another better. As we look at managing our time and lives better, we will be following the Scriptural command to live lives of love. This is how we find the abundant life that God has promised us.

1 John 4:16

1

7

"And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him."

Ephesians 5:14-17

"For it is light that makes everything visible. This is why it is said: "Wake up, O sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you." ¹⁵ Be very careful, then, how you live – not as unwise but as wise, ¹⁶ making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. ¹⁷ Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is."

The Great Commandments (Luke 10:27 & Mark 12:30)

- Love the Lord your God with all of your Heart, Soul, Mind and Strength.
- Love your neighbor as yourself.

Luke 10:27

"He answered: 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind'; and, 'Love your neighbor as yourself."

God has a plan for our lives

The truth is that God has a plan for our lives: to prosper us and not to harm us.

Jeremiah 29:11-13

"For I know the plans I have for you,' declares the Lord, 'plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. ¹² Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. ¹³ You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all of your heart."

God's Mission for Our Lives: PRIORITIES

Decision-Making and Priorities

- We all have a set of priorities and we all make decisions.
- The things you choose to do demonstrate what is important to you.
- When you choose one thing over another, you show that it has a higher priority.

Franklin Covey used this illustration to address the issue of priorities:

One day an expert was speaking to a group of business students and, to drive home a point, used an illustration those students will never forget. As this man stood in front of the group of high-powered overachievers he said, "Okay, time for a quiz." Then he pulled out a one-gallon, wide-mouthed mason jar and set it on a table in front of them. Then he produced about a dozen fist-sized rocks and carefully placed them, one at a time, into the jar. When the jar was filled to the top and no more rocks would fit inside, he asked, "Is this jar full?" Everyone in the class said, "Yes." Then he said, "Really?" He reached under the table and pulled out a bucket of gravel. Then he dumped some gravel in and shook the jar causing pieces of gravel to work themselves down into the spaces between the big rocks. Then he asked the group once more, "Is the jar full?" By this time the class was onto him. "Probably not," one of them answered. "Good!" he replied. He reached under the table and brought out a bucket of sand. He started dumping the sand in and it went into all the spaces left between the rocks and the gravel. Once more he asked the question, "Is this jar full?" "No!" the class shouted. Once again he said, "Good!" Then he grabbed a pitcher of water and began to pour it in

God's Mission for Our Lives:

Vision

Priorities

Values

Identity Roles



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until the jar was filled to the brim. Then he looked up at the class and asked, "What is the point of this illustration?" One eager beaver raised his hand and said, "The point is, no matter how full your schedule is, if you try really hard, you can always fit some more things into it!" "No," the speaker replied, "that's not the point. The truth this illustration teaches us is: If you don't put the big rocks in first, you'll never get them in at all."²

God's Priority Scale

- 1. Being Fully Human Empowered by our relationship with God
- 2. Our Family
- 3. Our Community
- 4. Our Calling and Profession

Our Needs

(Distilled from the Teachings of Abraham Maslow and Dr. Murray Banks)³

1. To Live

- 2. To Love and Be Loved
- 3. To Experience Variety
- 4. To Feel Important

God's Priorities are Focused on Meeting Our Needs

Our Needs	God's Priorities
To Live	Being Fully Human
To Love and Be Loved	Our Family
To Experience Variety	Our Community
To Feel Important	Our Calling and Profession

Summary

In this session we discussed:

- LFP Level 1: Clarifying God's Mission for Our Lives
- Law 2: The Law of Mission
- God's Mission for Our Lives

Vision

Priorities



For more resources, thoughts, and discussion about this session, please visit www.lifespringnetwork.org

Discussion and Reflection Questions

1. The Law of Mission: What are the implications of this law for your life?

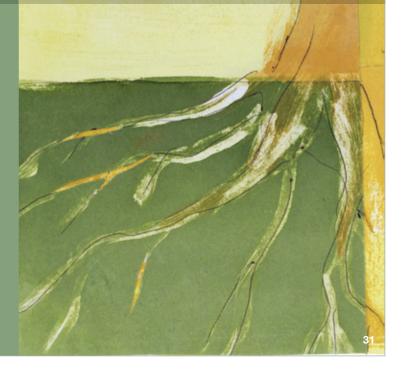
2. To what degree do you believe that God's overarching purpose for our lives is to experience and express love?

3. Look at the list of our priorities. Which one receives the majority of devotion in your life? Put the rest in your current priority order.

4. Consider the four basic needs as presented by Dr. Murray Banks. How do you see them functioning in your own life? What do you think about God's priority order in meeting those needs?

5. Which Scriptures stood out to you and why?

Session 3: Abundant Living



In this session participants will:

Cognitive (Knowing Objectives)

• Understand the power of perspective in experiencing God's Abundant Life.

Affective (Feeling Objectives)

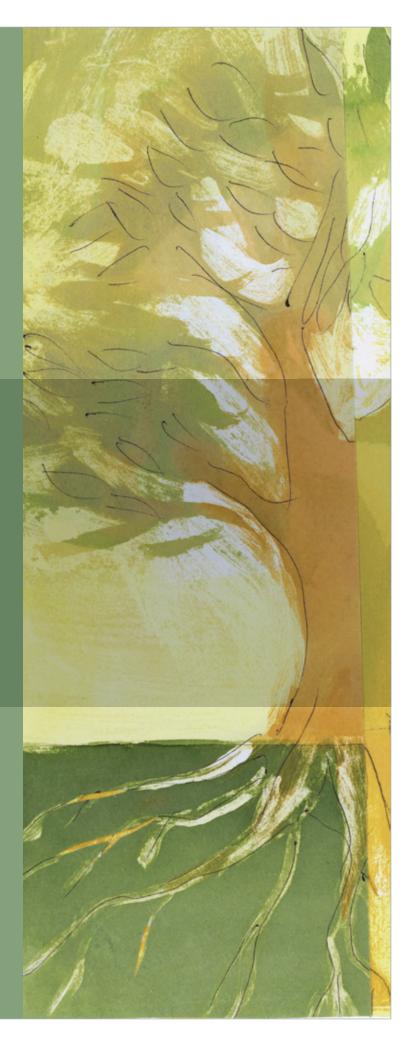
• Experience peace in the light of God's grace.

Behavioral (Doing Objectives)

• Articulate obstacles that hinder us from more fully doing the will of the Father.

Existential (Lifelong Objectives)

• Enter into the abundant Life based on the Cycle of Grace.





Session 3: Abundant Living

Review

In Session 2 we discussed:

- LFP Level 1: Clarifying God's Mission for Our Lives
- Law 2: The Law of Mission
- God's Mission for Our Lives Vision Priorities

Life Focus Process Level 1: Clarifying God's Mission for Our Lives



Life Spring

Clarify God's Mission for Our Lives Knowledge of His Vision, Priorities, Values and Identity Roles

Law 3: The Law of Abundant Life

When your life (being and doing) reflects God's governing mission for your life (Vision, Priorities, Values and Identity Roles) you experience the abundant life. [John 10:10; Psalm 1:1-6; Acts 20:24] OMEGA

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Session 3: Abundant Living

Reflective Question:

How does the image of the tree in this verse represent the spiritual life to you? What connection does this have with living the abundant life?



John 10:10

"The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full."

Psalm 1:1-6

"Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers. ² But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night. ³ He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers. ⁴ Not so the wicked! They are like chaff that the wind blows away. ⁵ Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous. ⁶ For the LORD watches over the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish."

Acts 20:24

"However, I consider my life worth nothing to me, if only I may finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me – the task of testifying to the gospel of God's grace."

Law 4: The Law of Perspective

Having a Biblical worldview and seeing life from God's perspective is essential if we are going to experience God's abundant life. [Luke 3:21-22; Mark 1:35; Galatians 4:6-7; John 15:1-5] If you can't see it, you can't do it!

Luke 3:21-22

"When all the people were being baptized, Jesus was baptized too. And as he was praying, heaven was opened ²² and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased."

Mark 1:35

"Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed."

Galatians 4:6-7

"Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, "Abba, Father." ⁷ So you are no longer a slave, but a son; and since you are a son, God has made you also an heir."

John 15:1-5

"I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. ² He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful. ³ You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. ⁴ Remain in me, and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. ⁵ "I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing."



"The world trains us to function like human doings, rather than human beings. But, if you are what you do, when you don't, you aren't." – Jason Pankau

For more resources, thoughts, and discussion about this session, please visit www.lifespringnetwork.org

Session 3: Abundant Living

Living with a Biblical Worldview

The combination of your various perspectives on life creates your worldview. It is out of this world view that we form beliefs which guide our behavior. Without a Biblical worldview it is impossible live God's abundant life. If you can't see it you can't do it!

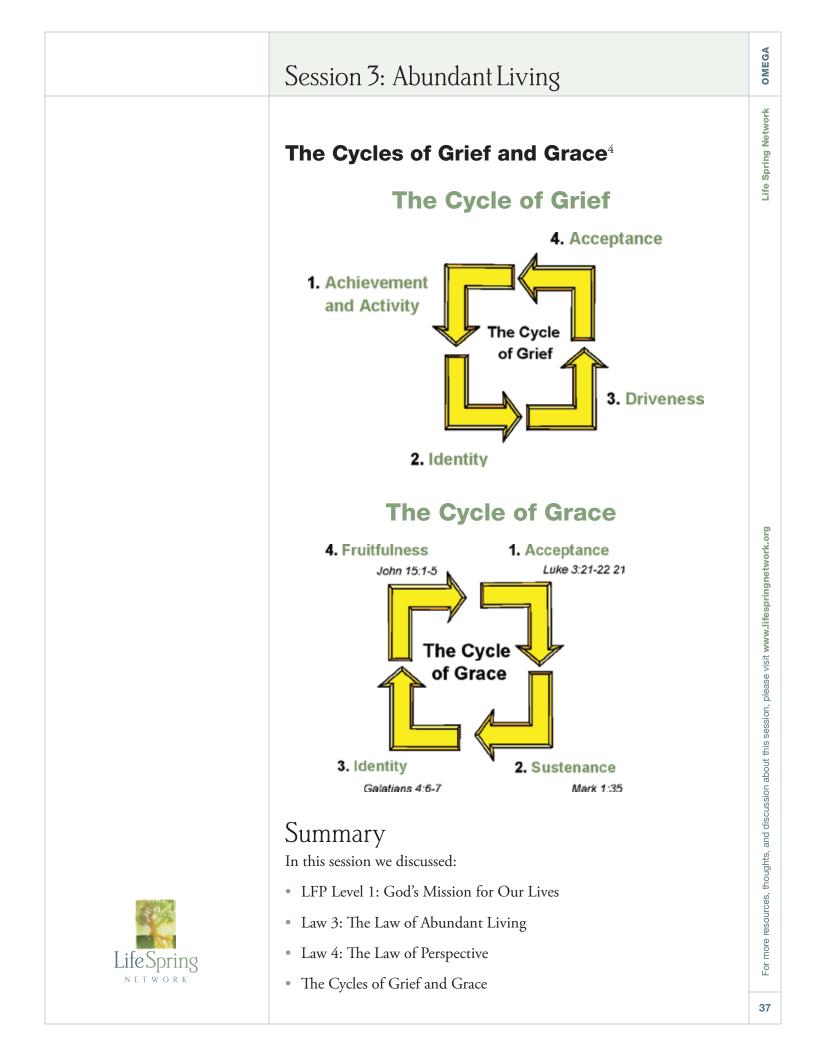
The Power of Biblical Perspective

The source determines the product. It is important that we understand the vital role of perspective and diligently guard and filter the various inputs that come into our lives. The Bible is the greatest repository of Godly perspective ever assembled! It is God's love letter to us, His children, trying to help us see and steward life from His perspective!

Worldviews and Cycles of Behavior

Our worldviews create reinforcing cycles of perspective, belief and behavior that can either trap us in lifestyles that lead to grief or guide us to experiencing and expressing love, and living the abundant life.

"For many of us the great danger is not that we will renounce our faith. It is that we will become so distracted and rushed and preoccupied that we will settle for a mediocre version of it." – John Ortberg



Session 3: Abundant Living

Discussion and Reflection Questions

1. The Law of Abundant Life: What are the implications of this law for your life?

2. Are there ways that you live that mock God?

3. The Law of Perspective: What are the implications of this law for your life?

4. What practices do you employ in your life in order to gain a Godly perspective on your life?

5. Look again at the Cycle of Grace and the Cycle of Grief. What questions do they bring to mind about your life, and where you are on your journey?

6. Which Scriptures stood out to you and why?

Session 4 The Seven Values of Abundant Living

In this session participants will:

Cognitive (Knowing Objectives)

Learn the Seven Values of Abundant Living and the corresponding Identities.

Affective (Feeling Objectives)

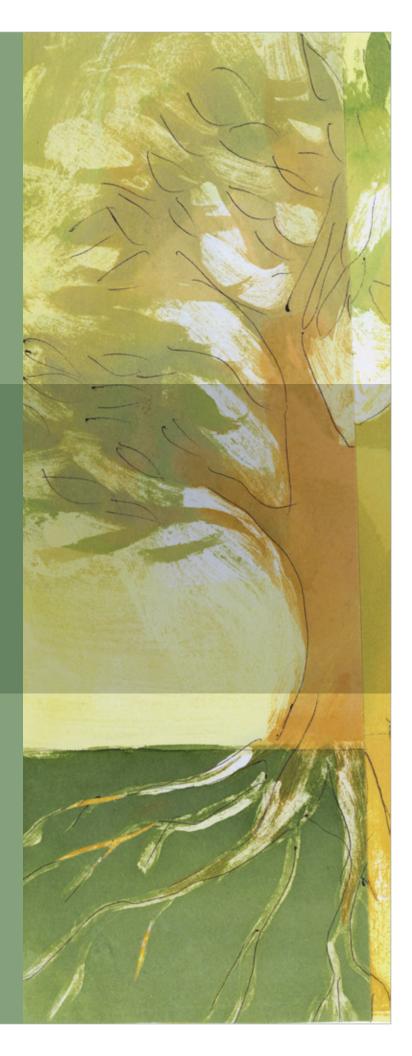
Rekindle the hope of Abundant Living that Christ offers those who believe.

Behavioral (Doing Objectives)

Pray the "Lord's Prayer" through the lens of the Seven Values of Abundant Living.

Existential (Lifelong Objectives)

 Become a believer whose identity promotes the values of Abundant Living in Christ.



OMEGA Session 4: The 7 Values of Abundant Living Life Spring Network Review In session 3 we discussed: • LFP Level 1: God's Mission for Our Lives • Law 3: The Law of Abundant Living • Law 4: The Law of Perspective • The Cycles of Grief and Grace Life Focus Process Level 1: Clarifying God's Mission for Our Lives For more resources, thoughts, and discussion about this session, please visit www.lifespringnetwork.org **God's Mission** for Our Lives: Clarify God's Mission for Vision **Priorities** God's Mission for Our Lives: VALUES Values

The Seven Values of Abundant Living (The 7 G's)⁵

For definitions and a fuller treatment of the 7 G's see Appendices B and C.

These seven values are seen throughout Scripture and make abundant living practical, applicable and accessible. For each value we will identify a corresponding identity which is made up of two components:

1. How I understand and relate to God (Experience His Love)

2. How I understand and relate to others (Express His Love)

Identity Roles



The Seven Values of Abundant Living

(The 7 G's)

Guidance

Grace

Growth

Glorification

Groups

Gifts

Good Stewardship

GUIDANCE

is necessary in order to carry out God's will.

We depend on God's leadership (guidance) in our lives which is available through the Holy Spirit.

Henry Blackaby: God's Will is revealed through:

- Prayer
- Scriptures
- Community
- Circumstances

Identity: Follower/Intercessor

- Follower: We believe we are the perfectly wrong people to be leading our own lives.
- Intercessor: We express love by praying for others that they might be connected to God's guidance as well.

GRACE

is God's bridge to us and our bridge to others.

Grace is "unmerited favor" and being able to say, "You can't stop me from loving you!"

Grace from God

As believers we are saved by grace through faith. There is a difference between God being disappointed *for* us and being disappointed *with* us.

Grace toward others

We don't have to stay in places of bitterness and resentment. We can forgive, allow the Lord to heal our hurts and move towards reconciliation. It means we can become the kind of people who say "you can't stop me from loving you!"

Forgiveness and Trust

I can forgive but that doesn't mean I'm going to keep putting myself in the same position where I can be abused over and over again. Reconciliation: the process of restoring trust over time.

"Not forgiving is like swallowing rat poison and waiting for the rat to die." – Anne Lamott

A Definition

Reconciliation: The process of restoring trust over time.

Identity: Child of God/Ambassador

• Child of God: We take our place as redeemed children of God.

• Ambassador: We can serve as God's bridge of grace to others...

ultimately connecting them to Him.

is a process toward full maturity in Christ.

We recognize that faith is a process...a journey toward taking hold of all that is Christ (Philippians 3:12), and through His Spirit we move toward fullness of Christ in us (Ephesians 4:12), pleasing Him in every way (1 Thessalonians 4:1).

GROWTH

We become diligent students of Scripture, allowing God's truth to be impressed on the very fabric of our lives.

We work to surround ourselves with mentors and friends who will love, challenge and provide guidance to us as we grow in faith.

Identity: Learner/Mentor

- Learner: We acknowledge that God desires for us to be holistically (mentally, emotionally, physically, spiritually, and socially) transformed by His Spirit.
- Mentor: As we mature in faith and God entrusts people to our care, we strive to be good mentors of the people in our lives who look to us for guidance and discipleship.

GLORIFICATION of God is the goal of our lives and our Church.

Whoever does something gets the credit. By letting God work, live and love through us He will receive the credit and the glory. As people recognize goodness in and through our lives we have the opportunity to give glory to God and testify to perfect guidance and power at work in our lives. This is how we "make God great" in our lives. We recognize that our tendency is to make ourselves great, and therefore commit to

"If you're not being mentored you're missing the boat!"

– Jason Pankau



a daily recalibration of aligning our will with the will of the Father. We accept that if glorification is the goal of the church, then it has to happen within our own lives first.

Ecclesiastes 3:9-14

"What does the worker gain from his toil? ¹⁰ I have seen the burden God has laid on men. ¹¹ He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the hearts of men; yet they cannot fathom what God has done from beginning to end. ¹² I know that there is nothing better for men than to be happy and do good while they live. ¹³ That everyone may eat and drink, and find satisfaction in all his toil – this is the gift of God. ¹⁴ I know that everything God does will endure forever; nothing can be added to it and nothing taken from it. God does it so that men will revere him."

Identity: Worshipper/Saint

- Worshipper: Someone whose life is devoted to bringing glorification to God both individually and corporately.
- Saint: (*hagios*: set apart to be used by God). We position ourselves in such a way that we're set apart, submitted to Him so that He can work through us and receive the credit.

GROUPS

of Biblically functioning community provide the optimal environment for life change.

It takes the Body...

If God is calling you to Guidance, Grace, Growth, and Glorification... you can't get there without the body of Christ, "doing life" and living out the "one anothers" of Scripture together as God's family. As we enter into covenant relationship with others, we are placing ourselves in the optimal environment to experience life change.

Embracing Diversity

Christ calls us together as a people belonging to God (1 Peter 2:9), a new creation (2 Corinthians 5:17) established in true righteousness and holiness (Ephesians 4:24), who in community are to declare His praises (1 Peter 2:9).

Reflective Question:

If someone adopted the perspective of this text, what impact would it have on his or her life?

(The 7 G's) Guidance

Grace

The Seven Values

of Abundant Living

Growth

Glorification

Groups

Gifts

Good Stewardship

Life Spring Network has developed an intensive eight-hour course on Spiritual Gifts, called Empowered Servanthood, to help you learn more about how God desires to use your unique gifts in the Kingdom.



If we:

- Engage in covenant community with others
- "Do life" with people whom God ordains
- Embrace the diversity of the body
- And strive to live out the "one anothers" of Scripture as God's family we place ourselves in the optimal environment for life change!

Identity: Receiver of Love/Expressor of Love

- **Receiver of Love:** We are willing to receive the love of God that He pours through others in the Body of Christ and directs toward us.
- Expressor of Love: As a member of the Body of Christ, we are willing to let God work through us and are willing to let God love through us to embody His love toward others.

GIFTS

of divine empowerment are given to all believers to grow God's Church.

We are called to both a Universal and Unique calling of Empowered Servanthood.

Specifically: Unique

Each of us has been given supernatural ability through the Holy Spirit. When everyone is embracing his or her gift, then the entire church working together becomes a picture of Christ for the world to see because the true gift is the Holy Spirit. (John 17:23).

In General: Universal

Just because someone might be gifted in Leadership doesn't mean he or she doesn't also take out the trash. Like God, we come not to be served but to serve and to give our lives for one another (Mark 10:45) in Love (John 15:12) and Unity.

The True Gift is the Holy Spirit

As we embrace our Universal and Unique giftings, we (the Church) become a living, breathing picture of the body of Jesus Christ right here on earth.



Identity: Empowered/Servant

- Empowered: We receive a unique empowerment through the Holy Spirit.
- Servant: We express our gifts through service to others.

"You reproduce who you are, not who you think you are." – Jason Pankau

GOOD STEWARDSHIP

is the reasonable response to our gracious God.

We act as managers (not owners) of our whole lives (time, abilities, relationships, resources, etc.) that have been entrusted to us for the time or season as He leads (Luke 16).

Time

One of our most valuable resources. Once it's gone, it's gone and we can never get it back. How many of us can say we're going to be here tomorrow with any amount of certainty?

It all starts with little things.

God wants us to make sure our own households are in order before stepping out to lead others. (See Appendix D for the requirements for elders in the Church.) Remember: you reproduce who you are.

Identity: Steward/Overseer

- Grateful Steward: We steward the time, talent, and treasure that has been given to us.
- Wise Overseer: People are God's most precious resource and the pinnacle of His creation, and therefore we will take the overseeing responsibilities in our lives seriously.

Seeing the Seven Values of Abundant Living in the "Lord's Prayer"

Value	the Lord's Prayer
Glorification	"Our Father in heaven, hallowed be
	your name,
Group	Your kingdom come,
Growth	Your will be done
Gifts	on earth as it is in heaven.
Good Stewardship	Give us today our daily bread.
Grace	Forgive us our debts as we also have
	forgiven our debtors.
Guidance	And lead us not into temptation but
	deliver us from the evil one"

A Summary of The Seven Values of Abundant Living and Their Belief Statements

In His desire for us to experience and express love, these seven values guide us toward His perspective on how to make that a practical reality and experience the abundant life.

Guidance is necessary in order to carry out God's will.

Grace is God's bridge to us and our bridge to others.

Growth is a process toward full maturity in Christ.

Glorification of God is the goal of our lives and our Church.

Groups of Biblically functioning community provide the optimal environment for life change.

Gifts of divine empowerment are given to all believers to grow God's Church.

Good Stewardship is the reasonable response to our gracious God.



Summary

In this session we discussed:

- LFP Level 1: God's Mission for Our Lives
- God's Mission for Our Lives Values

Discussion and Reflection Questions

1. Which of the Seven Values of Abundant Living are standing out to you the strongest right now and why?

2. Do you seek Guidance or merely advice from God these days?

3. Describe the journey that you have been on in your life seeking the Guidance of God.

4. How have you encountered the Grace of God in your life?

5. What practices have you engaged in that have facilitated Growth in Christlikeness in your life?

6. What has your journey with Glorification looked like in your life?

7. What has the experience of Groups of Biblically functioning community been like in your life?

8. Do you seek to operate in the power of the Holy Spirit in everyday life? If so have you identified any Spiritual Gifts that God tends to pour out through your life?

9. Given your current perspective on life, does Good Stewardship seem like a reasonable response? Why or why not?

10. Which Scriptures stood out to you and why?



In this session participants will:

Cognitive (Knowing Objectives)

• Grasp how engaging in our identity in Christ allows us to enter into the Abundant Life.

Affective (Feeling Objectives)

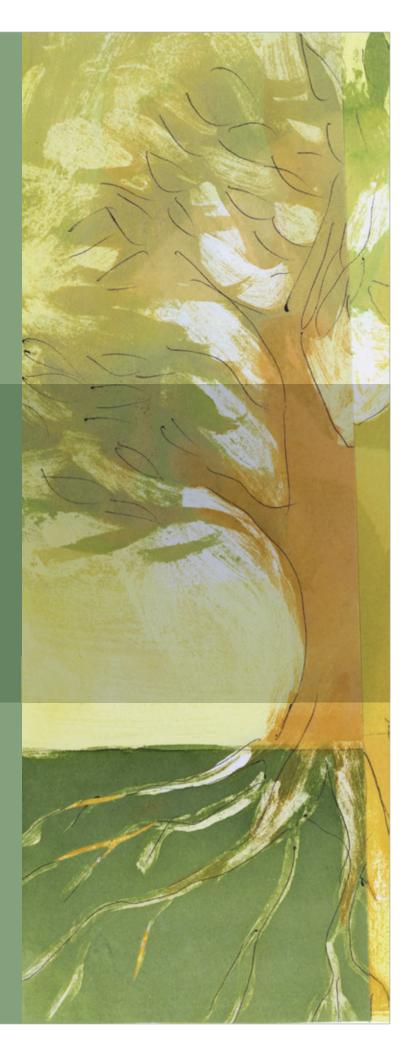
• Feel empowered to align our wills with the will of the Father.

Behavioral (Doing Objectives)

• Give God space to speak to us about who He has created us to be.

Existential (Lifelong Objectives)

• Be able to more fully experience and express love with all of our Heart.





Review

In Session 4 we discussed:

- LFP Level 1: God's Mission for Our Lives
- God's Mission for Our Lives Values

Life Focus Process Level 1: Clarifying God's Mission for Our Lives



Vision

Priorities

Values

Identity Roles



God's Mission for Our Lives: IDENTITY

Clarify God's Mission for Our Lives

Law 5: The Law of Identity

Abundant living comes from being who God created you to be and engaging in your identity in Christ. [Genesis 1:27, Psalm 139:13-16; Ephesians 2:8-10]



For more resources, thoughts, and discussion about this session, please visit www.lifespringnetwork.org

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Genesis 1:27

"So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them."

Psalm 139:13-16

"For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. ¹⁴ I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. ¹⁵ My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place. When I was woven together in the depths of the earth, ¹⁶ your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be."

Ephesians 2:8-10

"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith – and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God – 9 not by works, so that no one can boast. ¹⁰ For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do."

Governing Mission Statement

Writing a mission statement helps us define who we are and what we desire to strive toward in our lives. In a sense, it defines the target. To write a meaningful mission statement we must first understand our identity in Christ and write our vision statements for each role.

Roles and Vision Statements

- By defining each role (identity in Christ) in our lives we gain a holistic perspective of our new lives in Christ.
- A Vision Statement is a description of your understanding of who you would like to become in each role. It is your expression of what you believe to be ideal and worthy of striving toward.
- This is answering the question, "What does it look like to experience and express love in this role of my life?"
- Each role is accompanied by suggested disciplines that will help you to develop that identity role in your life.

Habakkuk 2:2

"Then the Lord replied: 'Write down the revelation and make it plain on tablets so that a herald may run with it.'"

Understanding Our Identity

Our identity in Christ gets expressed through the various roles we play in life. Take a look at your life on an average day to assess the roles that you play.

Identity Roles: Three Categories

Over the next few sessions we will be taking an in-depth look at three categories of our identity in Christ:

- Christ Follower
- Community Member
- Called Servant

Identity Role Category #1: Christ Follower

First and foremost, we are called to develop and grow personally in our relationship with God through Jesus Christ. Our connection to God brings life to our entire being!

Here we meet the needs we discussed in Session 1:

- To Live
- To Love and Be Loved
- To Experience Variety
- To Feel Important

Reflective Question:

Take a minute to think through your typical day and jot down some of the

roles that you play in your own life.

Identity Role Categories

- Christ Follower
- Community Member
- Called Servant



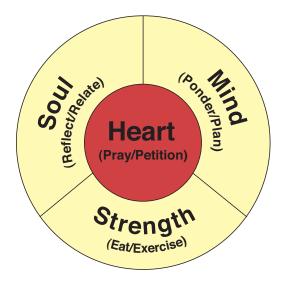
Luke 10:27 (& Mark 12:30-31)

"He answered: 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind'; and, 'Love your neighbor as yourself."

Being Human

Understanding the four aspects that make us human beings holds the keys to understanding both our sinful human nature and the God-guided and empowered lives that He has destined each and every one of us to live!

Identity Roles Diagram: Christ Follower™



Heart (Will, Spirit)

Heart has to do with our will, desires, dreams and spiritual center. It is the freest aspect of our being. We choose what we will love or want with our heart!

Roles of the Category:

Christ Follower:

- Heart
- Soul
- Mind
- Strength

Reflective Question: What do you think it means to be "spiritual?"

Genesis 6:5-6

"The LORD saw how great man's wickedness on the earth had become, and that every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all the time." ⁶ The LORD was grieved that he had made man on the earth, and his heart was filled with pain."

"In the end, Pharaoh got what he wanted. In the end...so do we." – Jason Pankau

Exodus 7:3-4a

Genesis 8:21

"But I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and though I multiply my miraculous signs and wonders in Egypt, ⁴ he will not listen to you."

"The LORD smelled the pleasing aroma and said in his heart:

will I destroy all living creatures, as I have done."

'Never again will I curse the ground because of man, even though every inclination of his heart is evil from childhood. And never again

Proverbs 4:23

"Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life."

Proverbs 27:19

"As water reflects a face, so a man's heart reflects the man."



For more resources, thoughts, and discussion about this session, please visit www.lifespringnetwork.org

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Ecclesiastes 6:1-2

"I have seen another evil under the sun, and it weighs heavily on men: ² God gives a man wealth, possessions and honor, so that he lacks nothing his heart desires, but God does not enable him to enjoy them, and a stranger enjoys them instead. This is meaningless, a grievous evil."

Luke 8:15

"But the seed on good soil stands for those with a noble and good heart, who hear the word, retain it, and by persevering produce a crop."

Ezekiel 36:26-27

"I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. ²⁷ And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws."

1 Peter 1:22

"Now that you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth so that you have sincere love for your brothers, love one another deeply, from the heart."

James 1:13-15

"When tempted, no one should say, 'God is tempting me.' For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; ¹⁴ but each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed. ¹⁵ Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death."

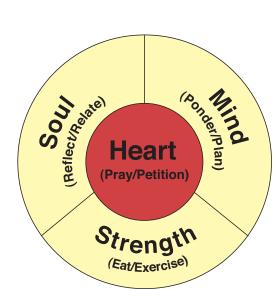
Revelation 1:3

"Blessed is the one who reads the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear it and take to heart what is written in it, because the time is near."

Remember:

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Love is a choice...an act of the will.



Heart - The Wellspring of Life

The Heart is the Wellspring of Life! It is the center of our being and our decision-making center. It takes in all of the input from our Soul, Mind and Strength and decides what it will.

When our heart is not submitted to God and His will for our lives, we lead ourselves toward destruction, but when we are submitted, God guides and empowers us to live the abundant life in our entire being!

Heart - The Disciplines

We grow through prayer, time spent in solitude with God and silence, intercession and watching. We need to realign our will with God's will for our lives.

Summary

In this session we discussed:

- Law 5: The Law of Identity
- The LFP Level 1: Clarifying God's Mission for Our Lives
- God's Mission for Our Lives

Identity Roles

Christ Follower

Heart



Discussion and Reflection Questions

1. The Law of Identity: What are the implications of this law to your life?

2. What kind of practices do you engage in to more clearly understand your identity in Christ?

3. Is it a scary idea for you to cry out to God and ask Him to tell you who you are? Why or why not?

4. Have you ever considered the central role that our hearts (will, dreams, desires and our spiritual center) play in our lives? Does it make sense to you that everything begins in the heart?

5. Do you find it difficult to believe that our sinful nature fights against us in the process of desiring God's will for our lives? Why or why not?

6. Which Scriptures stood out to you and why?



In this session participants will:

Cognitive (Knowing Objectives)

• Learn the roles of Being Human and how God desires to breathe life into our being.

Affective (Feeling Objectives)

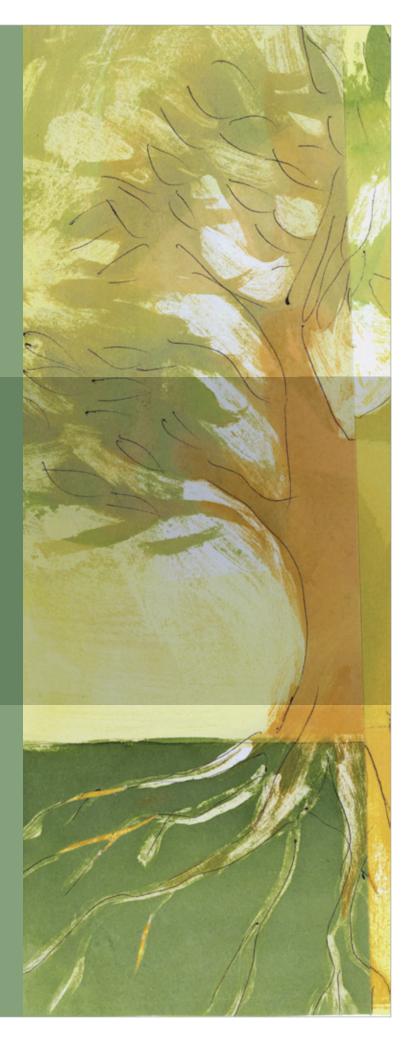
• Experience new variety through activating under-used roles of our identity in Christ.

Behavioral (Doing Objectives)

• Create Vision Statements for each aspect of the Role Category of Christ Follower.

Existential (Lifelong Objectives)

• Be able to experience and express love with all of our Soul, Mind, and Strength.



	Session 6: Being Fully Human	OMEGA
	Review In Session 5 we discussed: • Law 5: The Law of Identity • The LFP Level 1: Clarifying God's Mission for Our Lives • God's Mission for Our Lives Identity Roles Christ Follower Heart Life Focus Process Level 1: Clarifying God's Mission for Our Lives	Life Spring Network
Identity Role Categories • Christ Follower • Community Member • Called Servant	<image/> <section-header><section-header><section-header></section-header></section-header></section-header>	oughts, and discussion about this session, please visit www.lifespringnetwork.org
	Soul (Feelings, Personality, Conscience, Intuition)	oughts, and c

Soul has to do with the aspect of our being that is most uniquely the real us...our feelings, personality, conscience and intuition. This is God's thumbprint on our lives. It is the aspect of our being that is hard-wired to be like God and sense connection to His life in and through us.

SULING

NETWORK

Reflective Question: *What does your current*

prayer life look like? How readily do you spend time in solitude with Him?

Remember:

Soul is God's thumbprint on your life...the part of you that is "hard-wired" to be like God.

Reflective Question: *Have you ever experienced just "being" with someone in their grief?*

Hebrews 4:12

"For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any doubleedged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart."

Matthew 16:24-26

"Then Jesus said to his disciples, "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. ²⁵ For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will find it. ²⁶ What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world, yet forfeits his soul? Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul?"

Our Divine Connection

Soul is the aspect of our being that, when submitted to God, functions like a divine central nervous system, feeling, discerning and sensing what is right (Good) and wrong (Evil), then guiding the expression of our true selves through our personality.

Without a Holy Spirit-empowered Soul we lose connection to our true selves, the people God Created us to be.

The Soul's Role in our Being

The Soul is the most profound dimension of our being. As we live our lives and interact with people and events in our lives, our Soul regulates and processes what is happening in our Heart, Mind and Strength, and guides our response.

"Soul is that aspect of our being that correlates, integrates, and enlivens everything going on in the various dimensions of the self. It is the life center of the human being." (Dallas Willard)

The Soul is often understood to refer to the whole person because, without it functioning according to God's intended purpose, we are truly lost and cut off from really living.

Proverbs 16:24

"Pleasant words are a honeycomb, sweet to the soul and healing to the bones."

Proverbs 19:8

"He who gets wisdom loves his own soul; he who cherishes understanding prospers."

1 Peter 2:11

"Dear friends, I urge you, as aliens and strangers in the world, to abstain from sinful desires, which war against your soul."

The Soul's Role in Abundant Living

In the person with a well-aligned and growing Heart, the Soul will be properly ordered under God and in harmony with His "life that is really life." (1 Timothy 6:19)

The result of a surrendered Heart is a Holy Spirit-empowered Soul which is empowered to process and respond to life in ways that are good and right. Our Soul is constantly working to bring about God's life in and through our entire being. Guiding us to submit our Heart to God, which brings our Soul into submission to a God-empowered Heart, our Mind into submission to a God-empowered Soul, and our Strength into submission to a God-empowered Mind.

This brings about God's perfect rule in and through our entire being!

Matthew 26:38

"Then he said to them, "My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me."

Luke 2:34-35

"Then Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, his mother: "This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be spoken against, ³⁵ so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul too."

A Definition

Enthusiasm: "En Theos" "In God"

Roles of the Category:

Christ Follower:

- Heart
- Soul
- Mind
- Strength



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The Power of Feeling and the Soul

A Holy Spirit-empowered Soul is enabled to process and feel life the way God feels. We need to consciously cooperate with God in this, because it is not our natural reaction to rejoice with those who rejoice or mourn with those who mourn. (Romans 12:15)

When we turn off our emotions through a decision of our will (Heart), and choose not to feel the challenges of life (sadness, hurts, and disappointments), we turn our Soul off. When we do this we train ourselves not to feel and so miss out on the exhilaration of life as well. We process our Soul through sensing God's promptings and reflecting on our feelings and impressions about ourselves, people and circumstances in our lives – allowing God and His understanding of who we are to be expressed. When we cultivate the habit of repressing God's feelings we can sear our souls to the point that they become less responsive to both the ups and downs, the good and bad of life.

Soul - The Disciplines

Journaling, Singing, Meditation, Confession, Counseling, Reflection and Retreats are disciplines which foster your ability to understand and express the image of God in you.

Mind

Our minds enable us to process *ideas, images* and *information* with our *ability to think*. With this ability we discern what is true and organize our world view to accomplish a mission in life. All truth is God's truth! Plans are the strategies we formulate in our Minds. We also use our minds to set goals for our lives that move us towards our mission and evaluate its efficacy.

Romans 12:2

"Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is--His good, pleasing and perfect will."

"'When you shut yourself off emotionally, you shut yourself off ." – Jason Pankau

Reflective Question: *How does this text tie in with the idea of "mind?"* "For, as I have often told you before and now say again even with tears, many live as enemies of the cross of Christ. ¹⁹ Their destiny is destruction, their god is their stomach, and their glory is in their shame. Their mind is on earthly things."

The Realm of the Intellect: Mind

The realm of the Intellect – Mind involves four main factors: Ideas, Images, Information and Our Ability to Think, as originally described in Dallas Willard's *Renovation of the Heart*.⁶

"Ideas are very general models of, or assumptions about, reality. They are patterns of interpretations, historically developed and socially shared." Some examples include freedom, education, happiness, 'the American Dream,' and the Kingdom of God.

"Spiritual formation is inescapably a matter of recognizing in ourselves the ideas system (or systems) of evil that governs the present age and the respective culture (or various cultures) that constitutes life away from God. The needed transformation is very largely a matter of replacing in ourselves those idea systems of evil (and their corresponding cultures) with the idea system that Jesus Christ embodied and taught..." [which brings about] "the culture of the Kingdom of God. This is truly a passage from darkness to light."

"To change governing ideas, whether in the individual or the group, is one of the most difficult and painful things in human life. Genuine conversion is a wrenching experience. It rarely happens to the individual or group except in the form of divine intervention, revolution, or something very like a mental breakdown."

"Images are always concrete or specific, as opposed to the abstractness of ideas, and are heavily laden with feeling." They are closely associated with the governing ideas of our lives. "They mediate the power of governing idea systems by dialoguing with our soul and discerning how our ideas work in the real situations of ordinary life."

"Theology is just what you really think about God, and if you're going to do that, you'd better use your mind and not just let it be a receptacle a catch-all for whatever beliefs happen to be passing by." – Dallas Willard



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"Two laws that govern my life: The law of cognition: I am what I think. The law of exposure: My mind will think most about what it is most exposed to." – John Ortberg

"The prosperity of God's cause on Earth depends upon his people thinking well." – Dallas Willard

"Divine knowledge is the truth that the Spirit of God teaches us and puts into our minds. It is the knowledge and truth that is Spiritually discerned." – Jason Pankau What images come to mind when you think of Jesus? "Jesus of course understood the great significance of images and has, indeed, become one himself." The cross also functions as the most powerful symbol of all time.

Deliverance from Destructive Ideas and Images

"The person and Gospel of Jesus Christ – building on simple 'Jesus loves me, this I know, for the Bible tells me so' – is the only complete answer to the false and destructive images and ideas that control the life of those away from God. The process of spiritual formation in Christ is one of progressively replacing those destructive images and ideas with the images and ideas that filled the mind of Jesus Himself."

We thereby come increasingly to see "the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God" (2 Corinthians 4:4, NRSV).

Information: It is with our minds that we seek out, store and process information, both helpful and harmful.

"Without correct information, our ability to think" is restricted. "Without the requisite information, we may be afraid of thinking at all, or simply be incapable of thinking straight."

Our Ability to Think: "The Gospel of Jesus directly repudiates all false information about God and, therewith, about the meaning of human life; and it works to undermine the power of those ideas and images that structure life away from God. But for it to have this effect we must use our ability to think." Thinking is "the activity of searching out what must be true, or cannot be true, in the light of given facts or assumptions. It extends the information we have and enables us to see the 'larger picture'--to see it clearly and to see it wholly." Empowered by the Holy Spirit, "it undermines false or misleading ideas and images as well."

1 Corinthians 2:6-16

"We do, however, speak a message of wisdom among the mature, but not the wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing. ⁷ No, we speak of God's secret wisdom, a wisdom that has been hidden and that God destined for our glory before time began.

Session 6: Being Fully Human

⁸ None of the rulers of this age understood it, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. 9 However, as it is written: "No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him" - ¹⁰ but God has revealed it to us by his Spirit. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. ¹¹ For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the man's spirit within him? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. ¹² We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us. ¹³ This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words. ¹⁴ The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned. ¹⁵ The spiritual man makes judgments about all things, but he himself is not subject to any man's judgment: ¹⁶ For who has known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ."

Mind - The Disciplines

We grow by learning more about life through studying God's truth in the Bible, journaling, and through our own study of what is true in life. Synthesizing God's direction for our life and planning how to implement His Guidance through the use of life-planning tools and wisdom through life coaching.

Strength

This is our Energy and Abilities. We need to find the right balance or rhythm for the pace of our lives, which helps us to grow physically while remaining surrendered to living in and through God's Strength.

1 Corinthians 1:25

"For the foolishness of God is wiser than man's wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than man's strength."

Roles of the Category:

Christ Follower:

- Heart
- Soul
- Mind
- Strength



For more resources, thoughts, and discussion about this session, please visit www.lifespringnetwork.org

1 Peter 4:11

"If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking the very words of God. If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen."

Philippians 4:12-13

"I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. ¹³ I can do everything through him who gives me strength."

1 Corinthians 6:19-20

Rest while observing the Sabbath Principles!

"Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; ²⁰ you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body."

Strength - The Disciplines

We grow through Surrender, Temperance (diet), Fasting, Exercise and

Reflective Question:

mr 1111 11

What does your "Sabbath" time look like? How do you best experience times of true rest?

The Disciplines: P.R.E.P.²

Set up time: the time it takes to put things in order, or arrange things so that you can start on a specific task or start each day properly! Take time to set up your being for each day using P.R.E.P.²^{~~}

P.R.E.P. ²
Pray & Petition
Reflect & Relate
Eat & Exercise
Ponder & Plan



Discussion and Reflection Questions

1. Which primary area of your being (Heart, Soul, Mind and Strength) did you find the most intriguing and why?

2. In what ways have you sought to gain something from the world at the expense of your own Soul?

3. How do you see having the mind of Christ as an essential aspect of stewarding life from His perspective?

4. Do you desire to do life in and through God's strength? If so, what are some of the practices that you engage in to keep yourself in that surrendered place?

5. What are some of the key disciplines that you want to implement right away? Do you think you will P.R.E.P.²

6. What Scripture verses stood out to you most and why?



In this session participants will:

Cognitive (Knowing Objectives)

 Recognize the importance of community as a tool God uses to keep us on-track and growing.

Affective (Feeling Objectives)

• Experience a renewed sense of connection with others in our Inner Circle and Relative/Parent relationships.

Behavioral (Doing Objectives)

• Articulate a vision for the role of Inner Circle, Relative/Parent of the Community Member Role Category.

Existential (Lifelong Objectives)

 Facilitate and foster deep, meaningful relationships with the people in our Inner Circle and Relative/Parent relationships.





Review

In Session 6 we discussed:

 The LFP Level 1: Clarifying God's Mission for Our Lives God's Mission for Our Lives Identity Roles

Christ Follower

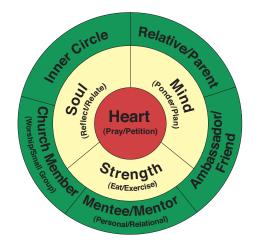
Soul

Mind Strength

Life Focus Process Level 1: Clarifying God's Mission for Our Lives



God's Mission for Our Lives: IDENTITY



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A Definition

Covenantal Relationship: One where relational expectations are defined and agreed upon.

Reflective Question: *To what degree do you define relational expectations in your life*?

"As we mature in our faith, our focus in relationships shifts from what I'm going to get...to what I'm going to give." – Jason Pankau

Identity Role Categories

• Christ Follower

Community Member

Called Servant

Law 6: The Law of Community

We need the love, fellowship, wisdom and accountability of Christ-centered covenant relationships to keep us on track and growing. [Galatians 6:1-10]

Galatians 6:1-10

"Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted. ² Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. ³ If anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself. ⁴ Each one should test his own actions. Then he can take pride in himself, without comparing himself to somebody else, ⁵ for each one should carry his own load. ⁶ Anyone who receives instruction in the word must share all good things with his instructor. ⁷ Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. ⁸ The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life. ⁹ Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. ¹⁰ Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers."

Identity Role Category #2: Community Member

The next three needs,

- To love and be loved
- To experience variety
- To feel important

are met and experienced in the context of community.

Roles of the Category:

Community Member:

- Inner Circle
- Relative/Parent
- Church Member
- Mentee/Mentor
- Ambassador/Friend

Reflective Question: *How do your soulmates/friends*

function in your life?

"Make it a rock…You can't cancel, only reschedule." – Jason Pankau

"When we honestly ask ourselves which person in our lives means the most to us, we often find that it is those who, instead of giving advice, solutions, or cures, have chosen rather to share our pain and touch our wounds with a warm and tender hand." – Henri Nouwen



We will explore five aspects of the role of Community Member:

Session 7: Essential Intimacy

- Inner Circle
- Relative/Parent
- Church Member
- Mentee/Mentor
- Ambassador/Friend

Inner Circle

For those of us who are married, our first role is that of being a spouse or having relational oneness. For those of us who are single, it is being single and relating to our great friends. These are our most trusted and intimate relationships outside of our relationship with God. Some would call them soulmates, for they desire to see God's best for us and from us.

Because the people in our inner circle are the most trusted and feel the most secure, they unfortunately are the first relationships that we are most likely to neglect when life gets too busy. Second only to our time with God, these relationships need to be the next biggest rock in our life. Like the "Big Rocks" illustration we used when talking about priorities, these relationships are "big rocks" in our lives.

Genesis 2:24

"For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh."

Ephesians 5:31-33

"For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh." ³² This is a profound mystery – but I am talking about Christ and the church. ³³ However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband."

Roles of the Category:

Community Member:

- Inner Circle
- Relative/Parent
- Church Member
- Mentee/Mentor
- Ambassador/Friend

Matthew 17:1-3

"After six days Jesus took with him Peter, James and John the brother of James, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. ² There he was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as the light. ³ Just then there appeared before them Moses and Elijah, talking with Jesus."

Inner Circle: The Disciplines

We grow through Fellowship, Chastity, Celebration, Hospitality and Confession while consistently praying for and relationship building with our spouses and/or great friends.

Relative/Parent

These are the relationships in our lives we are responsible to and for. We are responsible to honor our parents and responsible for our children.

Proverbs 22:6

"Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it."

Ephesians 6:4

"Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord."

1 Timothy 3:4

"He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him with proper respect."

3 John 1:4

"I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth."

Remember:

Relative/Parent is more of a vertical relationship, whereas Inner Circle is more horizontal.

Ephesians 6:1

"Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right."

Mark 6:4-5

"Jesus said to them, 'Only in his hometown, among his relatives and in his own house is a prophet without honor.' ⁵ He could not do any miracles there, except lay his hands on a few sick people and heal them."

Relative/Parent: The Disciplines

We grow through Fellowship, Sacrifice, Celebration, Hospitality and Submission while consistently praying for and connecting with our parents, relatives and children if appropriate.

Summary

In this session we discussed:

- Law 6: The Law of Community
- The LFP Level 1: Clarifying God's Mission for Our Lives
- God's Mission for Our Lives

Identity Roles

Community Member Inner Circle Relative/Parent



Discussion and Reflection

1. The Law of Community: What are the implications of this law for your life?

2. Who are you accountable to in your life and what are those relationships like?

3. What has your experience living in covenant relationships been like in your life? How do you think it can get better?

4. What is your plan for building into and investing in the inner circle of your life?

5. How do you build into the Relative/Parent relationships in your life?

6. What Scripture verses stood out to you most and why?

Session 8 Contagious Community



In this session participants will:

Cognitive (Knowing Objectives)

• Identify each of the five aspects of the Community Member Role Category.

Affective (Feeling Objectives)

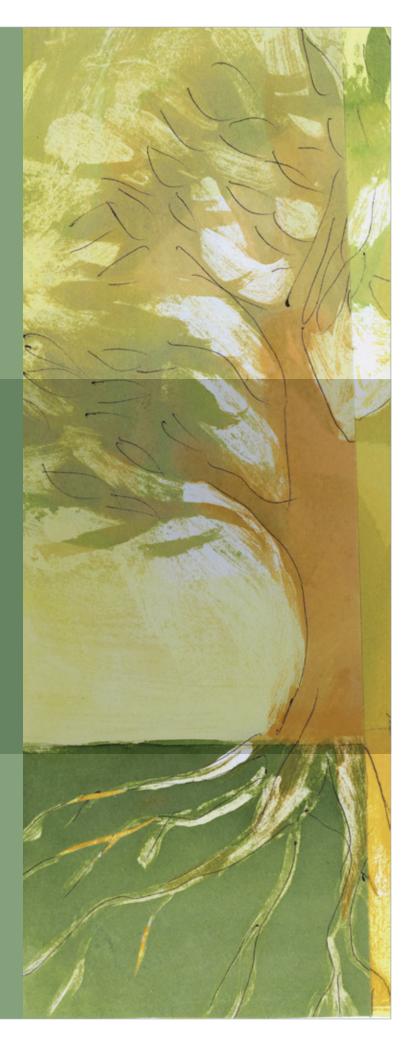
• Experience a renewed sense of connection with others in your Church Member, Mentee/ Mentor, Ambassador/Friend relationships.

Behavioral (Doing Objectives)

• Articulate a vision for the roles of Church Member, Mentee/Mentor, Ambassador/Friend of the Community Member Role Category.

Existential (Lifelong Objectives)

• Facilitate and foster deep, meaningful relationships with the people in our Church Member, Mentee/Mentor, Ambassador/Friend relationships.



	Session 8: Contagious Community	OMEGA
	Review In Session 7 we discussed: • Law 6: The Law of Community • The LFP Level 1: Clarifying God's Mission for Our Lives • God's Mission for Our Lives Identity Roles Community Member Inner Circle Relative/Parent	Life Spring Network
	Life Focus Process Level 1: Clarifying God's Mission for Our Lives	
		² or more resources, thoughts, and discussion about this session, please visit www. lifespringnetwork.org
Roles of the Category: Community Member:		ession, pl
Inner Circle	Clarify God's Mission for Our Lives Knowledge of His Vision, Priorities, Values and Identity Roles	ut this se
Relative/Parent	Cod's Mission for Our Lines IDENTITY	sion abo
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Mentee/Mentor	Identity Role Category #2:	nts, and
 Ambassador/Friend 	Community Member	, though
LifeSpring	Church Member Following Christ together with other brothers and sisters in Christ in covenant community is essential for us to realize the love and variety	For more resources,

Identity Role Category #2: Community Member

Church Member

Following Christ together with other brothers and sisters in Christ in covenant community is essential for us to realize the love and variety that God desires for us all to experience.

- Church Member
- Mentee/Mentor
- Ambassador/Friend



Session 8: Contagious Community

"In our day heaven and earth are on tiptoe waiting for the emerging of a Spirit-led, Spirit-intoxicated, Spirit-empowered people. All of creation watches expectantly for the springing up of a disciplined, freely gathered, martyr people who know in this life the life and power of the kingdom of God. It has happened before. It can happen again...

Such a people will not emerge until there is among us a deeper, more profound experience of an Emmanuel of the Spirit – God with us, a knowledge that in the power of the Spirit Jesus has come to guide His people Himself, an experience of His leading that is as definite and as immediate as the cloud by day and fire by night." – Richard Foster

Matthew 12:46-50

"While Jesus was still talking to the crowd, his mother and brothers stood outside, wanting to speak to him. ⁴⁷ Someone told him, "Your mother and brothers are standing outside, wanting to speak to you." ⁴⁸ He replied, "Who is my mother, and who are my brothers?" ⁴⁹ Pointing to his disciples, he said, "Here are my mother and my brothers. ⁵⁰ For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother."

The "One Anothers" of Scripture

The "One Anothers" of Scripture define God's desire for how we should intentionally relate to one another. Don't assume this will happen naturally. We get the privilege of inviting others to join this life-giving community. There is nothing like a Biblically functioning community when it is functioning well. (See Appendix E for a full listing of the "One Anothers" of Scripture.)

The Seven Values of Abundant Living and Contagious Christian Community (Acts 2:42-47)

Acts 2:42-47	Value
42 "They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching	Growth
and to the fellowship,	Group
to the breaking of bread	Grace
and to prayer.	Guidance
43 Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles.	Gifts
44 All believers were together and had everything in common.45 Selling their possessions and goods they gave to anyone as he had need.	Good Stewardship
46 Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, 47 praising God	Glorification
and enjoying the favor of all of the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.	Grace

Reflective Question:

How does this picture of the early church compare with the churches that you are familiar with today?

Session 8: Contagious Community

We grow through Worship, Fellowship, Confession, Assembling, Celebration, Singing, Hospitality and Communion while consistently praying for and relating to our church family and engaging in small group and local fellowship gatherings.

Mentee/Mentor

It should be our goal to willingly learn from those who are wiser than we are and then be God's conduit of wisdom for others as He leads.

Proverbs 15:22

"Plans fail for lack of counsel, but with many advisers they succeed."

Mentoring: A Definition

Christian Mentoring is an intentional relational process where someone is guided, empowered, and encouraged by God through another to embrace God's Presence, steward life from God's Perspective and realize his/her potential through God's Power.

What Mentoring is NOT:

- Mentoring is not the same as Teaching
- Mentoring is not the same as Counseling
- Mentoring is more than Friendship

What Mentoring IS:

• It is its own discipline a kind of hybrid from the other disciplines, but nonetheless unique. It includes a good mentor, is intentional and draws from the example of Jesus.

Roles of the Category:

Community Member:

- Inner Circle
- Relative/Parent
- Church Member
- Mentee/Mentor
- Ambassador/Friend

"Statistics tell us that 90% of what is said in a sermon is forgotten in 24 hours. So if you are basing your faith life on hearing sermons, your growth will be anemic at best." – Jason Pankau



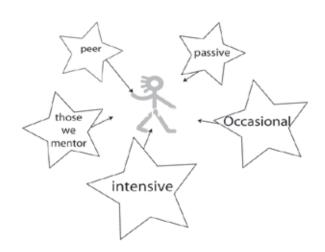
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The Mentoring Constellation Model 7

"A helpful indicator of the type of leader you are comes from the observations and comments of those who know you best. None of us has the ability to objectively assess who we are or how we perform. If you doubt this, sit in on a dozen or so job interviews or employee performance reviews. The disconnect between self-perception and reality is frequently alarming." – George Barna

"Mentoring is a brain to pick, an ear to listen, and a push in the right direction." – John Crosby



Intensive Mentor

An individual who is willing to play an intentional role in your development for accountability, follow-through and spiritual transformation. Intensive mentors function like Christian Life Coaches.

- Establishing the basics of following Christ Key: Implementing a personal growth plan
- 2. Moving toward spiritual maturity Key: Relying on the Holy Spirit
- 3. Moving toward personal maturity Key: Actively improving performance

Occasional Mentor

An individual who provides timely advice and correct perspectives – helping us rightly view ourself, others, circumstances and ministry when needed.

Occasional Mentors can be a:

- Sounding Board
- Resource Mentor
- Counselor
- Skill Coach
- Career Coach
- Discipler

Session 8: Contagious Community

Key: Learning to listen to God

Reflective Question:

What has your previous experience been with being a Mentee/Mentor?

"Successful people turn everyone who can help them into sometime mentors."

– John Crosby

"Nobody gets great at anything without a coach."

– Jason Pankau



Passive Mentor

A passive mentor is an individual who may not realize you view him/her as a mentor, but nonetheless you are watching him/her and modifying your beliefs and behavior accordingly.

There are many heros in biographies we've read or the authors and speakers whose lives inspire us to make dynamic changes on our own. Key: A value-led, Christlike life

Peer Mentor

These are friends and colleagues who play an important role of support, perspective, collaboration and networking.

Peer mentors are at a similar stage of life journey and are learning similar lessons to what you are currently learning.

Key: A peer perspective and companionship

Those We Mentor

Mentoring is a dialogue and God will challenge us through the interaction of those we mentor.

1 Thessalonians 5:11-13

"Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing. Now we ask you, brothers, to respect those who work hard among you, who are over you in the Lord and who admonish you. Hold them in the highest regard in love because of their work. Live in peace with each other."

Session 8: Contagious Community

Mentee/Mentor: The Disciplines

We grow through Guidance, Study, Pilgrimage, Sabbatical, Submission and meeting regularly with mentors, counselors, and covenant community members who help us to implement what we are learning into our lives. We learn from studying books, tapes, videos and taking classes. We also meet regularly with others who seek us out for mentoring.

Ambassador/Friend

As God's ambassadors we are commissioned to reach out and share God's love with the people we come into contact with.

2 Corinthians 5:16-21

"So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer. ¹⁷ Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! ¹⁸ All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: ¹⁹ that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. ²⁰ We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. ²¹ God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God."

Turning our world of relationships upside down. We are called to show the world God's design for relationships: not based on what we can get from one another but rather on loving people for who they are and sharing with them God's grace and truth.

Roles of the Category:

Community Member:

- Inner Circle
- Relative/Parent
- Church Member
- Mentee/Mentor
- Ambassador/Friend

"You don't have to beat them over the head with the Gospel, you can just live your life in the power of the Holy Spirit and let Him love people through you." – Jason Pankau

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"The friend who can be silent with us in a moment of despair or confusion, who can stay with us in an hour of grief and bereavement, who can tolerate not knowing...not healing, not curing... that is a friend who cares." – Henri Nouwen

Reflective Question:

What does representing Christ "well" look like?



1 Peter 3:13-16

"Who is going to harm you if you are eager to do good? ¹⁴ But even if you should suffer for what is right, you are blessed. Do not fear what they fear; do not be frightened. ¹⁵ But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, ¹⁶ keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander."

1 Thessalonians 4:11-12

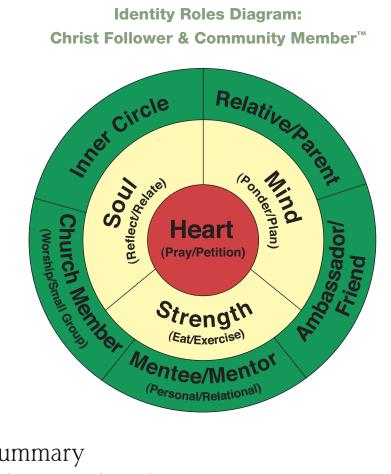
"Make it your ambition to lead a quiet life, to mind your own business and to work with your hands, just as we told you, ¹² so that your daily life may win the respect of outsiders and so that you will not be dependent on anybody."

Ambassador/Friend: The Disciplines

We grow through Friendship Evangelism, Hospitality, regular prayer for and connection with friends, and sharing the Gospel with them in word and deed.

Regular involvement in our local community and civic organizations. Sharing the love of God with them in word and deed.

Session 8: Contagious Community



Summary

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In this session we discussed:

- The LFP Level 1: Clarifying God's Mission for Our Lives
- God's Mission for Our Lives

Identity Roles

Community Member

Church Member

Mentee/Mentor

Ambassador/Friend

Discussion and Reflection Questions

1. Which of the core community identities (Church Member, Mentee/Mentor, Ambassador/Friend) do you feel like you need to pay more attention to, and why?

2. Are you living in covenant community with others in God's family? If so, describe the difference that being a member of God's family has made in your life. If not, what has your experience with Christian community been like in your life?

3. Do you have spiritual and relational mentors in your life who you meet with regularly in order to seek out God's wisdom and training for your growth?

5. Do you take seriously the commission to be Christ's Ambassador in this world to the people you come into contact with? What is your plan for growing as a connector?

6. Which Scriptures stood out to you and why?

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Session 8: Contagious Community



In this session participants will:

Cognitive (Knowing Objectives)

• Grasp how God desires to utilize your calling to express His love to the world.

Affective (Feeling Objectives)

• Be inspired to make strategic decisions about compassion issues.

Behavioral (Doing Objectives)

• Reflect on how you can align yourself more closely with God's calling for your life and create a vision statement for the identity role of Minister of Compassion.

Existential (Lifelong Objectives)

• Magnify your impact as a Called Servant by living as a Minister of Compassion.





Review

In Session 8 we discussed:

- The LFP Level 1: Clarifying God's Mission for Our Lives
- God's Mission for Our Lives

Identity Roles

Community Member Church Member Mentee/Mentor Ambassador/Friend

Life Focus Process Level 1: Clarifying God's Mission for Our Lives





God's Mission for

Our Lives:

Vision

Priorities

Identity Roles

Values



God's Mission for Our Lives: IDENTITY

Law 7: The Law of Calling

God has called and equipped each person to function interdependently with others in a concerted effort to express His love to the world. [Ephesians 2:8-10; 2 Thessalonians 1:11-12; Ephesians 4:1-16] OMEGA

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Ephesians 2:8-10

"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith – and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God – 9 not by works, so that no one can boast. ¹⁰ For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do."

2 Thessalonians 1:11-12

"With this in mind, we constantly pray for you, that our God may count you worthy of his calling, and that by his power he may fulfill every good purpose of yours and every act prompted by your faith. ¹² We pray this so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ."

Ephesians 4:1-16

"As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. ²Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. ³ Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. ⁴ There is one body and one Spirit - just as you were called to one hope when you were called - ⁵ one Lord, one faith, one baptism; ⁶ one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all. ⁷ But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it. 8 This is why it says: "When he ascended on high, he led captives in his train and gave gifts to men." 9 (What does "he ascended" mean except that he also descended to the lower, earthly regions? ¹⁰ He who descended is the very one who ascended higher than all the heavens, in order to fill the whole universe.) ¹¹ It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, ¹² to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up ¹³ until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. ¹⁴ Then we will no longer be

Reflective Question:

How do these texts help us to replicate the DNA of the original disciples?

For more resources, thoughts, and discussion about this session, please visit www.lifespringnetwork.org

"What would it look like if we were comfortable letting each other take the reins of leadership according to his or her maturity and gifting?" – Jason Pankau

Identity Role Categories

- Christ Follower
- Community Member
- Called Servant

Roles of the Category:

Called Servant:

- Minister of Compassion
- Steward of Resources
- Empowered Servant
- Profession
- Mentee/Mentor



infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming. ¹⁵ Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ. ¹⁶ From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work."

Identity Role Category #3: Called Servant

The last facet of our identity in Christ is a servant/worker – doing what God has uniquely gifted us to do in the world.

This is where we meet our need to experience variety and feel important as we contribute to the building of God's Church, serving the poor and working in the marketplace.

We will explore five identity roles of the category of Called Servant:

- Minister of Compassion
- Steward of Resources
- Empowered Servant
- Calling Mentee/Mentor
- Professional _____

Minister of Compassion

We are called to serve the poor among us. Our compassion for the "poor" and appreciation of God's blessings on our lives increases when we intentionally serve those less fortunate than ourselves with our lives. Life Spring Network

2 Corinthians 1:3-5

"Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, ⁴ 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. ⁵ For just as the sufferings of Christ flow over into our lives, so also through Christ our comfort overflows."

Zechariah 7:9-10

"This is what the LORD Almighty says: 'Administer true justice; show mercy and compassion to one another. ¹⁰ Do not oppress the widow or the fatherless, the alien or the poor. In your hearts do not think evil of each other.'"

Reflective Question:

Who are the "widow or the fatherless, the alien or the poor" of our day?

James 1:27

"Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world."

Minister of Compassion: The Disciplines

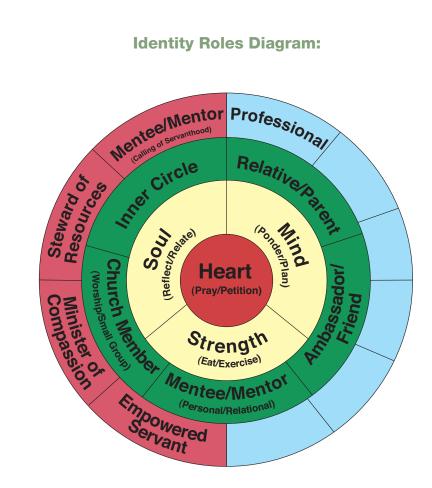
We grow through Secrecy, Service and Sacrifice while serving the "poor in our world" and compassionately loving them as led by God. This includes, but is not limited to, visiting the sick and prisoners, and clothing and feeding those in need.

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Bonus Scripture: Isaiah 58:6-11

"Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke? ⁷Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter when you see the naked, to clothe him, and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood? ⁸Then your light will break forth like the dawn, and your healing will quickly appear; then your righteousness will go before you, and the glory of the LORD will be your rear guard. ⁹Then you will call, and the LORD will answer; you will cry for help, and he will say: Here am I. "If you do away with the yoke of oppression, with the pointing finger and malicious talk, ¹⁰and if you spend yourselves in behalf of the hungry and satisfy the needs of the oppressed, then your light will rise in the darkness, and your night will become like the noonday. ¹¹The LORD will guide you always; he will satisfy your needs in a sunscorched land and will strengthen your frame. You will be like a well-watered garden, like a spring whose waters never fail."





Summary

In this session we discussed:

- Law 7: The Law of Calling
- The LFP Level 1: Clarifying God's Mission for Our Lives
- God's Mission for Our Lives

Identity Roles Called Servant Minister of Compassion

Discussion and Reflection

1. The Law of Calling: What are the implications of this law for your life?

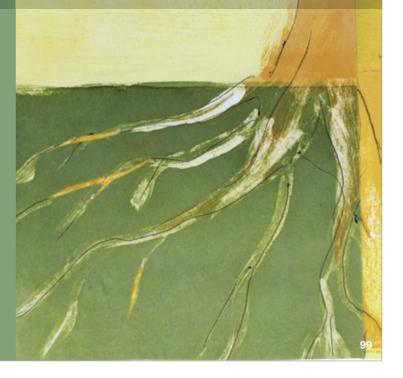
2. What does it mean to you to live a life worthy of God's calling?

3. How has God prompted you to serve others as a Minister of Compassion in your life?

4. In assessing your strengths how would you say that God has equipped you to serve "the poor?"

5. What do you do to proactively seek out people in need of help that you have been called and equipped to serve?

6. What Scripture verses stood out to you most and why?



In this session participants will:

Cognitive (Knowing Objectives)

• Learn the identity role of Steward of Resources of the Called Servant Identity Category.

Affective (Feeling Objectives)

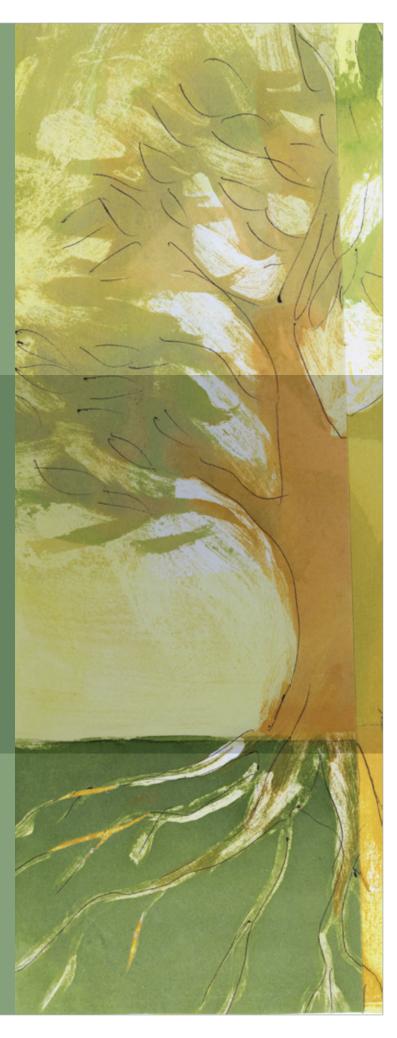
• Be inspired to make strategic decisions about financial issues which lead to contentment and peace.

Behavioral (Doing Objectives)

• Form a snapshot of your current financial picture and create a vision statement for the identity role of Steward of Resources.

Existential (Lifelong Objectives)

• Magnify your impact as a Called Servant by living as a Steward of Resources.



	Session 10: Stewarding Resources	OMEGA
	Review In Session 9 we discussed: • Law 7: The Law of Calling • The LFP Level 1: Clarifying God's Mission for Our Lives • God's Mission for Our Lives Identity Roles Called Servant Minister of Compassion	Life Spring Network
	Life Focus Process Level 1: Clarifying God's Mission for Our Lives	
Roles of the Category: Called Servant:		ssion, please visit www.lifespringnetwork.org
 Minister of Compassion Steward of Resources 	God's Mission for Our Lives: IDENTITY	bout this ses
Empowered Servant Profession	Identity Role Category #3: Called Servant	, and discussion a
• Mentee/Mentor Life Spring	Steward of Resources Our next role as a Called Servant is that of a Steward of Resources. We are stewards of the resources God entrusts to us.	For more resources, thoughts, and discussion about this session, please visit www.l

LifeSpring

Life Spring Network has developed a fourhour seminar called Making Cent\$ that will help you dig deeper into your role as a Steward of Resources. We will consider five financial areas of being a Steward of Resources: Diligent Earners, Generous Givers, Wise Savers, Cautious Debtors, and Prudent Consumers. These five categories and definitions come from Dick Towner's Good Sense Conselor Training Workshop.⁸

Proverbs 13:22

"A good man leaves an inheritance for his children's children, but a sinner's wealth is stored up for the righteous."

Titus 3:14

"Our people must learn to devote themselves to doing what is good, in order that they may provide for daily necessities and not live unproductive lives."

1 Timothy 5:8

"If anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for his immediate family, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever."

Aspects of the Role:

Steward of Resources

- Diligent Earners
- Generous Givers
- Wise Savers
- Cautious Debtors
- Prudent Consumers

Diligent Earners

The Diligent Earner is one who works with commitment, purpose and a grateful attitude.

Commitment

Colossians 3:23 "Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men..."

Purpose

1 Timothy 5:8 "If anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for his immediate family, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever."

Attitude

Deuteronomy 8:17-18 "You may say to yourself, 'My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me.' ¹⁸ But remember the Lord your God, for it is He who gives you the ability to produce wealth, and so confirms his covenant, which he swore to your forefathers, as it is today."

Generous Givers

The Generous Giver is one who gives with an obedient will, a joyful attitude and a compassionate heart.

We were made to give. God created us to be channels, not receptacles. Giving changes lives.

Why God wants us to give:

- As a response to God's goodness. (James 1)
- To focus on God as our source of security. (Matthew 6)
- To help achieve economic justice. (Acts 2:42-47; 2 Corinthians 8:13-15)
- To bless others Blessed to be a blessing! (Genesis 12)
- To break the hold of money on our lives.

Reflective Question:

Why do you think nothing lives in the Dead Sea?

Aspects of the Role:

Steward of Resources

- Diligent Earners
- Generous Givers
- Wise Savers
- Cautious Debtors
- Prudent Consumers



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Aspects of the Role: Steward of Resources

- Diligent Earners
- Generous Givers
- Wise Savers
- Cautious Debtors
- Prudent Consumers

Wise Savers

The Wise Saver is one who builds, preserves, and invests with discernment.

The mind and heart of God on Saving:

• It is wise to save.

Proverbs 21:20 "In the house of the wise are stores of choice food and oil, but a foolish man devours all he has."

• It is sinful to hoard.

Luke 12:18-21 "Then he said, 'This is what I'll do. I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. ¹⁹ And I'll say to myself, "You have plenty of good things laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry." ²⁰ "But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?" ²¹ "This is how it will be with anyone who stores up things for himself but is not rich toward God."

It is wise to save for an unexpected hardship but foolish to stockpile for things beyond our needs.

Reflective Question:

Where do you see the line between saving and hoarding in your life?

Aspects of the Role:

Steward of Resources

- Diligent Earners
- Generous Givers
- Wise Savers
- Cautious Debtors
- Prudent Consumers

"The Bible says, 'if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that' (1 Timothy 6:8). So how far into the bonus are we in America?" – Jason Pankau



Cautious Debtors

The Cautious Debtor is one who avoids entering into debt, is careful and strategic when incurring debt, and always repays debt.

Scriptural Guidelines:

- Repay debt
- Avoid debt

Incur debt strategically: understand the cost of everything.

Spiritual Dangers of Debt:

• Presumes on the future.

James 4:14 "Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes."

Denies God the opportunity to teach us something.

Luke 12:31 "But seek his kingdom, and these things will be given to you as well."

• Fosters envy and greed.

Luke 12:15 "Then he said to them, "Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions."

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Aspects of the Role: Steward of Resources

- Diligent Earners
- Generous Givers
- Wise Savers
- Cautious Debtors
- Prudent Consumers

Reflective Question:

Are your financial decisions more strategic choices or reactions to circumstances?

"Genuine financial freedom is the contentment we experience as we faithfully manage our financial resources according to God's purposes, principles, priorities and promptings." – Jason Pankau

Prudent Consumers

The Prudent Consumer is one who enjoys the fruit of his/her labor yet guards against materialism.

Financial Principles:

Beware of Idols

Deuteronomy 5:7-8 "You shall have no other gods before me.⁸ "You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below."

• Guard against Greed

Luke 12:15 "Then he said to them, "Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions."

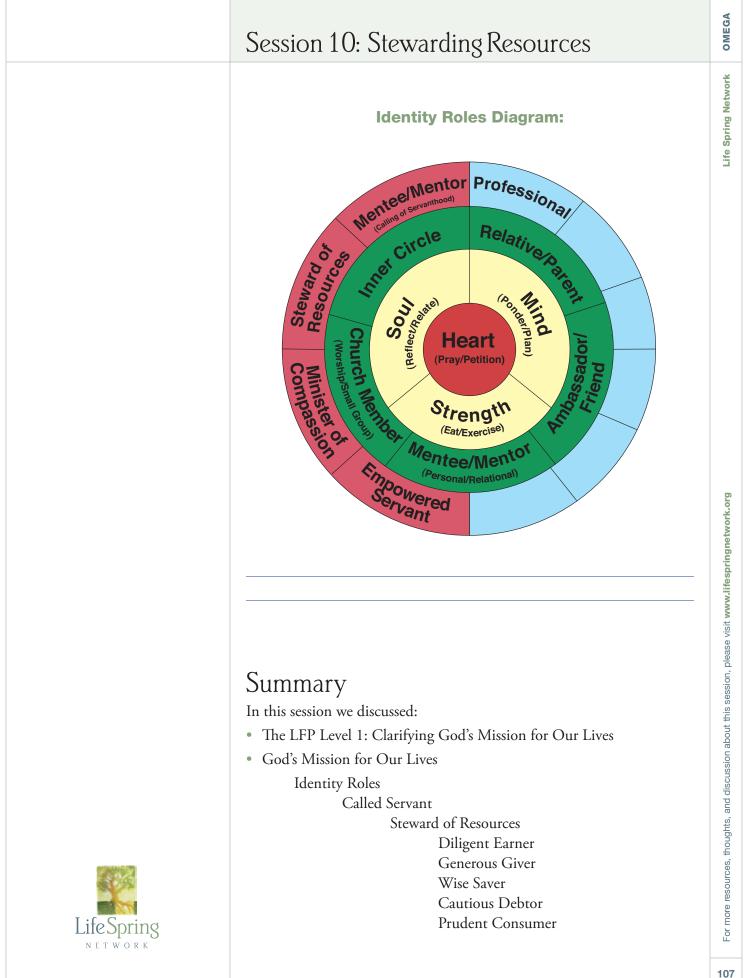
Be Content

Philippians 4:12-13 "I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do everything through him who gives me strength."

Contentment with gratitude for what we have is the antidote for greed and envy.

Steward of Resources: The Disciplines

We grow through Simplicity, Frugality, Saving, Sacrifice and Giving (including Tithing) while stewarding God's resources.



Session 10: Stewarding Resources

Discussion and Reflection Questions

1. Which of the Steward of Resources Identities (Diligent Earner, Generous Giver, Wise Saver, Cautious Debtor or Prudent Consumer) do you feel like you need to pay more attention to, and why?

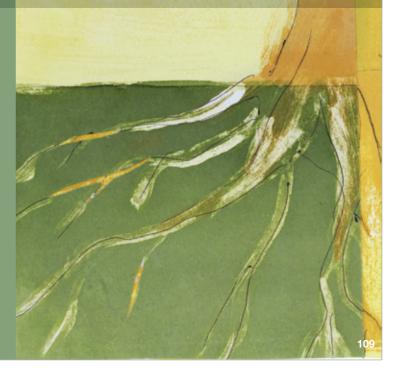
2. How much time do you invest in stewarding the resources God has entrusted to your care? How could you do it better?

3. What does the battle between acting as an owner versus a steward of God's resources entrusted to your care look like these days?

4. What aspect of being a Steward of Resources do you feel you are most obedient in?

5. Which Scripture verses stood out to you and why?

Session 11 Empowered to Serve



In this session participants will:

Cognitive (Knowing Objectives)

• Learn the identity role of Empowered Servant of the Called Servant Identity Category.

Affective (Feeling Objectives)

• Be encouraged to rely on the Holy Spirit as the "True Gift" that will never leave or forsake us.

Behavioral (Doing Objectives)

• Articulate vision statements for the identity role of Empowered Servant.

Existential (Lifelong Objectives)

 Participate in the manifestation of God's divine empowerment of the Church through the exercising of Spiritual Giftings for the building of His Kingdom.



Session 11: Empowered to Serve

Review

In Session 10 we discussed:

- The LFP Level 1: Clarifying God's Mission for Our Lives
- God's Mission for Our Lives
 Identity Roles
 Our Lives

Called Servant

Steward of Resources

Diligent Earner Generous Giver Wise Saver

Cautious Debtor Prudent Consumer

Life Focus Process Level 1: Clarifying God's Mission for Our Lives



- Vision
- Priorities
- Values
- Identity Roles

NETWORK

Clarify God's Mission for Our Lives Knowledge of His Vision, Priorities, Values and Identity Roles

God's Mission for Our Lives: IDENTITY

Identity Role Category #3: Called Servant OMEGA

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Session 11: Empowered to Serve

Roles of the Category:

Called Servant:

- Minister of Compassion
- Steward of Resources
- Empowered Servant
- Profession
- Mentee/Mentor

Life Spring Network has developed an intensive eight-hour course on Spiritual Gifts to help you learn more about how God desires to utilize your unique gifts in the Kingdom.

Reflective Question:

What is the attitude toward spiritual gifts that comes through in this text?

Empowered Servant

We are called to use our spiritual gifts and original abilities to build the church.

To be servants:

- In General, Universally
- Specifically, Uniquely

Being an Empowered Servant means you receive a "divine empowerment"- God showing up through you on the face of the earth in the power of the Holy Spirit.

What is a Spiritual Gift?⁹

- A distinctive ability, given by the Holy Spirit to every Christian, according to God's grace and design, for the purpose of building up the body of Christ.
- A God-given supernatural capacity that enables you to do an effective ministry.

What are the primary Scripture passages for Spiritual Gifts?

- Romans 12:3-8 and 1-2,9-21 for proper attitude towards the gifts.
- 1 Corinthians 12:1-31, and Chapters 13 & 14 for proper understanding of their use.
- Ephesians 4:7-16
- 1 Peter 4:7-11

Romans 12:3-8

"For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given

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There are texts which point to additional gifts. We have included a comprehensive list later in this session and in Appendix F with accompanying definitions.

"You get to choose whether or not you are going to ask God to lead and empower your life through His Holy Spirit or if you are going to try and do it all in your own strength." – Jason Pankau



you. ⁴ Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, ⁵ so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others." ⁶ We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. ⁷ If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; ⁸ if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully."

1 Peter 4:7-11

"The end of all things is near. Therefore be clear minded and self-controlled so that you can pray. ⁸ Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins. ⁹ Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling. ¹⁰ Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms. ¹¹ If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking the very words of God. If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen."

Do I Choose My Own Gift?

Yes and No!

Yes. The Holy Spirit is the real Gift, and you choose to allow His leadership and power into your life.

No. The Holy Spirit chooses to manifest particular gifts through particular individuals according to His understanding of the needs of the Kingdom at that time.

Reflective Question: Why doesn't God just give us

all the gifts at once?

Reflective Question: *How could this list affect our expectations and involvement in an average Sunday service at church?*

-

Session 11: Empowered to Serve

Can I Lose My Gifts?

No! The Holy Spirit is the Gift and He will never leave you! But like a muscle our gifts need to be exercised!

The Gifts the Holy Spirit gives you can manifest themselves in different ways during different seasons in your life according to your maturity, position in ministry, and the requirements of any given situation!

Why Did God Choose to Give Me Spiritual Gifts?

The big picture reason is for: Service

- To glorify Himself 1 Peter 4:11
- To build up the Body of Christ Ephesians 4:11-12
- To develop unity in the Body of Christ Ephesians 4:13
- To develop maturity in the Body of Christ Ephesians 4:14-15
- To grow the Body of Christ Ephesians 4:16
- For the common good of the Body of Christ 1 Corinthians 12:7

Ephesians 4:11-13

"It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, ¹²to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up ¹³ until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ."

What is the Difference between Spiritual Gifts and Original Abilities?

Original Abilities	Spiritual Gifts
Received from biological parents	Given by God through the Holy Spirit
Present from natural birth	Present from conversion
Benefit people in the earthly realm	Benefit people in the spiritual realm
Advance human or God's plans	Advance God's plans
Results are usually temporal	Results are eternal
Glorify self	Glorify God

What is the difference between Spiritual Gifts and the Fruit of the Spirit?

Galatians 5 lists nine fruit of the Spirit - love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

These are character attributes that every Christian can exhibit and should strive to allow the Holy Spirit to enable them to exhibit!

Fruit of the Spirit	Spiritual Gifts	
Shapes the character of a Christian	Shapes the service of a Christian	
The same for every Christian	Different for each Christian	
Evidence of Maturity	Evidence of Faithfulness	
Permanent, continually available	God can redirect spiritual gifts	
The desired attribute itself	The method and means for ministry	





The Character-Gifting Balance

Developing Christlike character is essential to being an Empowered Servant. God will only pour forth his power through our lives in proportion to our character's ability to handle it or, as the Scriptures say, in proportion to our faith.

How Many Gifts Are There?

The primary Scripture passages list 20 and there is Biblical support for at least 12 others. For definitions, see Appendix F.

Prophecy	Knowledge	Hospitality
Stewardship	Faith	Missionary
Teaching	Healing	Intercession
Miracles	Craftsmanship	Exhortation/Disciple Maker
Giving	Discernment	Music/Worship Leader
Leadership	Helps/Service	Creative Communication
Apostleship	Pastor/Shepherd	Mercy/Compassion
Wisdom	Tongues	Interpretation of Tongues
Evangelist	Deliverance	Administration
Martyrdom	Celibacy	Voluntary Poverty
Encouragement		Community Builder

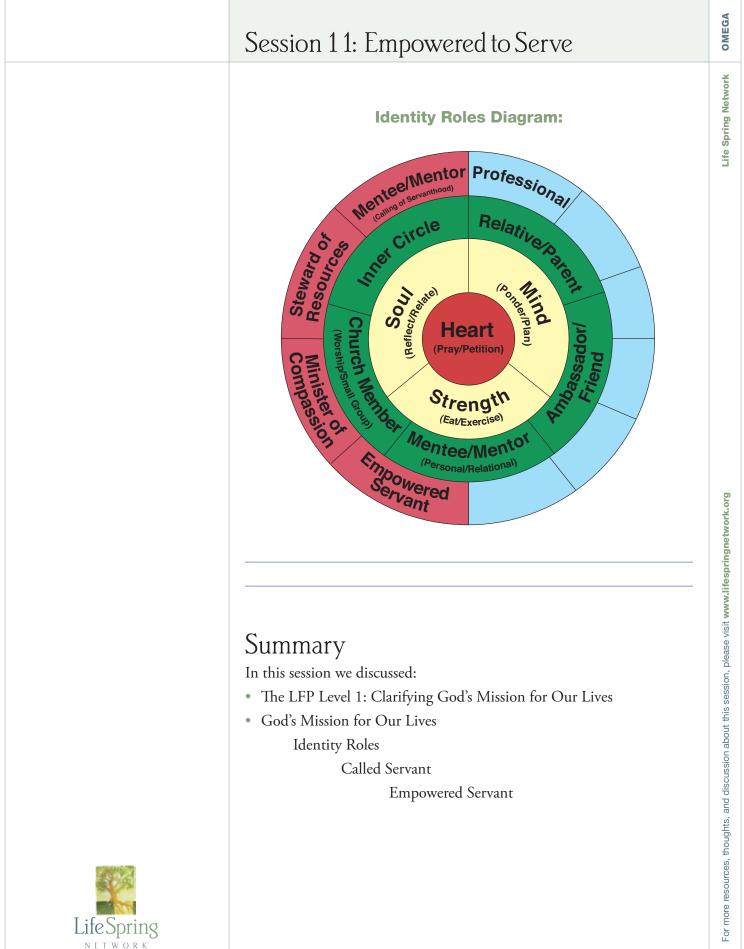
Empowered Servant: The Disciplines

We grow through Teaching, Service, Sacrifice and Fellowship and through the regular exercising of spiritual gifts while serving on ministry teams.

"Character is doing the right thing when no one is looking." – J.C. Watts

Remember:

Just because you may have gifts in one specific area doesn't mean that God won't manifest other gifts in you at times as well.



Session 11: Empowered to Serve

Discussion and Reflection

1. What has your experience as an Empowered Servant in this world been like?

2. What has the journey of using your original abilities to serve God and bring glory to His name been like for you?

3. Do you understand the importance of the Character-Gifting balance in your life? How would you describe this balance to a new friend?

4. What is your plan to figure out how God is asking you to serve with your gifts and develop yourself in this area?

5. What Scripture verses stood out to you and why?

In this session participants will:

Cognitive (Knowing Objectives)

• Learn the aspects of Calling Mentee/ Mentor and Profession of the Called Servant Identity Role.

Affective (Feeling Objectives)

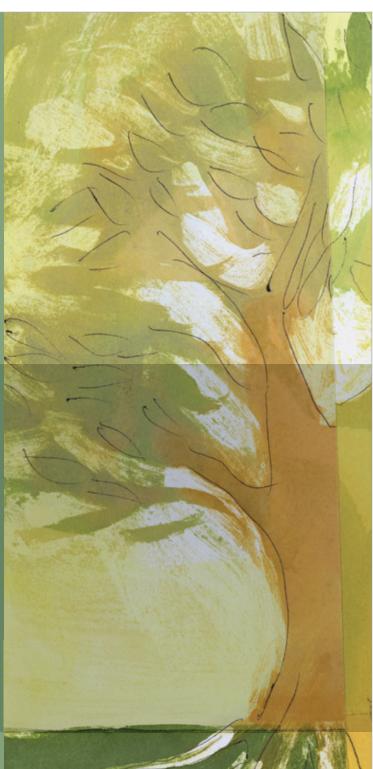
• Feel the freedom and joy of expressing significant transforming love through servanthood.

Behavioral (Doing Objectives)

• Articulate vision statements for the identity roles of Calling Mentee/Mentor and Profession.

Existential (Lifelong Objectives)

 Magnify our impact as a Called Servant by living as a Calling Mentee/Mentor and Professional.





Review

In Session 11 we discussed:

- The LFP Level 1: Clarifying God's Mission for Our Lives
- God's Mission for Our Lives

Identity Roles

Called Servant

Empowered Servant

Life Focus Process Level 1: Clarifying God's Mission for Our Lives



- Vision
- Priorities
- Values
- Identity Roles





God's Mission for Our Lives: IDENTITY

Clarify God's Mission for Our Lives

Identity Role Category #3: Called Servant

Law 8: The Law of Servanthood

In serving one another with our lives, we become free and express significant transforming love! [John 13:1-17]

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John 13:1-17

"It was just before the Passover Feast. Jesus knew that the time had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he now showed them the full extent of his love. ² The evening meal was being served, and the devil had already prompted Judas Iscariot, son of Simon, to betray Jesus. ³ Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God; ⁴ so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. ⁵ After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him. ⁶ He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?" 7 Jesus replied, "You do not realize now what I am doing, but later you will understand." ⁸ "No," said Peter, "you shall never wash my feet." Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no part with me." 9 "Then, Lord," Simon Peter replied, "not just my feet but my hands and my head as well!" ¹⁰ Jesus answered, "A person who has had a bath needs only to wash his feet; his whole body is clean. And you are clean, though not every one of you." ¹¹ For he knew who was going to betray him, and that was why he said not every one was clean. ¹² When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. "Do you understand what I have done for you?" he asked them. ¹³ "You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am. ¹⁴ Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. ¹⁵ I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. ¹⁶ I tell you the truth, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. ¹⁷ Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them."

Being Served By God Precedes Serving God

Being served by God is a prerequisite for serving God. Jesus' teaching here completely disrupted the social order and the disciples understanding of true servanthood. In general Jewish servants did not wash their

Reflective Question:

Which is more difficult for you: serving others or being served yourself?

"True humility in servanthood is not thinking less of yourself, it is thinking of yourself less." – unknown

Roles of the Category:

Called Servant:

- Minister of Compassion
- Steward of Resources
- Empowered Servant
- Mentee/Mentor
- Profession

"The only lasting impact our lives will have beyond the grave comes from the investments God makes into others' lives through us. For whatever God does lasts forever." – Jason Pankau



Session 12: The Freedom of Servanthood

master's feet – often a Gentile slave would do it, so what Jesus did was a double whammy. Greek grammar suggests the pulling back of Peter's feet... the emphatic almost prideful rejection of worth, and this to Jesus. This act amounted to irreverence and want of confidence. "The first condition of discipleship is surrender." Peter Wagner

True Humility in Servanthood is not thinking less of yourself... it's thinking of yourself less.

Without being able to receive from Jesus we will never be able to receive Him through others and therefore never really be able to experience and therefore express love. We are only able to love others well when we are able to be loved.

Living with an Eternal Perspective: From Success to Significance

Invest your life by serving others and your success will turn into significance of the eternal kind. Generosity and selflessness cause us to grow and increase our experience of the abundant life. This increases our experience of the abundant life, from God's perspective, in our time here on earth.

Engaging our calling of servanthood gives our lives greater satisfaction, expression and meaning. The only lasting treasures that will live beyond the grave come from investments God makes through us in the power of the Holy Spirit. These are eternal investments or fruit that will last.

Calling Mentee/Mentor

It should be our goal to willingly learn from those who are wiser than we are, then to be God's conduit of wisdom for others as He leads. This role of Mentee/Mentor applies specifically to our Professional Context.

Roles of the Category:

Called Servant:

- Minister of Compassion
- Steward of Resources
- Empowered Servant
- Mentee/Mentor
- Profession

Proverbs 15:22

"Plans fail for lack of counsel, but with many advisers they succeed."

Calling Mentee/Mentor: The Disciplines

We grow through Guidance, Study, Pilgrimage, Sabbatical, Submission and meeting regularly with mentors, counselors, and covenant community members who help us to implement what we are learning in our lives. We learn from studying books, tapes, videos and taking classes. We also meet regularly with others who seek us out for mentoring.

Profession

Here is where we are called to work in a profession which can support our family financially.

This needs to be categorized individually so that we are focused. Fill in the diagram on the next page according to the roles you play in your specific professional context. Note: Professional Mom 2006 salary: \$134,121.

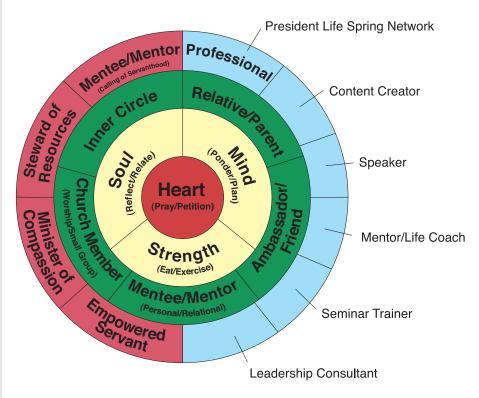
2 Thessalonians 3:6-15

"In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we command you, brothers, to keep away from every brother who is idle and does not live according to the teaching you received from us. ⁷ For you yourselves know how you ought to follow our example. We were not idle when we were with you, ⁸ nor did we eat anyone's food without paying for it. On the contrary, we worked night and day, laboring and toiling so that we would not be a burden to any of you. ⁹ We did this, not because we do not have the right to such help, but in order to make ourselves a model for you to follow. ¹⁰ For even when we were with you, we gave you this rule: "If a man will not work, he shall not eat." ¹¹ We hear that some among you are idle. They are not busy; they are busybodies. ¹² Such people we command and urge in the Lord Jesus Christ to settle down and earn the bread they eat. ¹³ And as for you, brothers, never tire of doing what is right. ¹⁴ If anyone does not obey our instruction in this letter, take special note of him. Do not associate with him, in order that he may feel ashamed. ¹⁵ Yet do not regard him as an enemy, but warn him as a brother."

Profession: The Disciplines

Diligent Earner through faithful accomplishment of tasks and Friendship Evangelism through relationship excellence while Serving as unto the Lord.

Identity Roles Diagram: Christ Follower, Community Member, Called Servant[™]





Roles of the Category:

Called Servant:

- Minister of Compassion
- Steward of Resources
- Empowered Servant
- Mentee/Mentor
- Profession

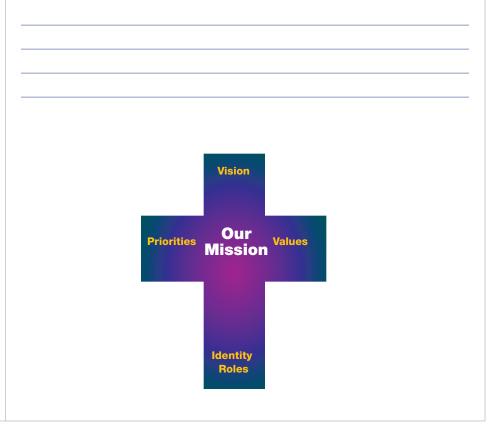
For more resources, thoughts, and discussion about this session, please visit www.lifespringnetwork.org

Your Vision Statements

Once we have completed the corresponding vision statements for the 14 Identity Roles (as found in the Roles Diagram on the previous page), as well as the vision statements for your individually categorized Professional Roles, we will have a better and more holistic picture of the life God is inviting us to live. If you can see it you can do it!

Your Personal Mission Statement

To CONNECT in real loving relationship, with God through Jesus CHRIST in the power of the Holy Spirit (Heart, Soul, Mind, and Strength), with others in contagious Christian COMMUNITY (Inner Circle, Relative/Parent, Church Member, Mentee/Mentor, and Ambassador/Friend) and with my CALLING of Servanthood in the World (Minister of Compassion, Steward of Resources, Empowered Servant, Calling Mentee/Mentor and in my Profession as):



A Living Mission Statement

Continuing to think through the various components that make up our Mission Statement will help us to live it.

Vision: What does it mean to Experience and Express love in each area of life? Continue to expand and revise your vision statements for each role of your life.

Priorities: Regularly review how you are investing your life and discern roles upon which you are over and under focusing. This helps to focus our decision-making, put areas of our lives in proper relationship to one another and invest our time wisely and holistically.

Values: Pray the Seven Values of Abundant Living into your life and ask God to guide the hows and whys of what you do.

Identity Roles: Use the Identity Roles Diagram to organize the various areas of life, set goals and as a framework for pursuing holistic Christlikeness.

Summary

In this session we discussed:

- Law 8: The Law of Servanthood
- The LFP Level 1: Clarifying God's Mission for Our Lives
- God's Mission for Our Lives

Identity Roles

Called Servant

Profession

Mentee/Mentor



Discussion and Reflection

1. The Law of Servanthood: What are the implications of this Law for your life?

2. Have you ever experienced the power of servanthood in your life? If so, explain the freedom that comes from servanthood that you have experienced.

3. What has your experience been like with mentoring in the different areas of your calling? How do you think you could function better in this role as both a mentee and mentor?

4. In your profession do you feel the tension of serving as unto the Lord? Describe what this struggle is like in your life these days.

5. What Scripture verses stood out to you most and why?

In this session participants will:

Cognitive (Knowing Objectives)

Understand principles of the Road of Life and the Cycle of Renewal.

Affective (Feeling Objectives)

• Feel empowered to pursue God's transformational training in righteousness.

Behavioral (Doing Objectives)

• Fully engage in the Cycle of Renewal as a means to spiritual maturity.

Existential (Lifelong Objectives)

• Commit to pursuing God's "narrow way" on the Road of Life with an awareness of the obstacles and resources available to us through God and His church.





Review

•

In Session 12 we discussed:

- Law 8: The Law of Servanthood
- The LFP Level 1: Clarifying God's Mission for Our Lives
 - God's Mission for Our Lives Identity Roles Called Servant Profession

Mentee/Mentor

Life Focus Process Level 2: Commit to Transformation

Commit to Transformation Discipleship and Reality

Clarify God's Mission for Our Lives (nowledge of His Vision, Priorities, Values and Identity Roles

The journey of faith is not without its trials and tribulations. Many times new believers will encounter trouble and find themselves asking, "What happened?" It is important to take a look at the process of transformation and what to expect along the way so there are no surprises.

Law 9: The Law of Transformation

We must choose to submit ourselves to God's mission and His transforming power, if we are going to experience more abundance in life. [Isaiah 64:8, Romans 12:1-3; 2 Corinthians 3:16-18]

"Much of what we hear about Christianity is information and maybe inspiration - not as much transformation - and that is what God is really after." – Jason Pankau





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Reflective Question:

What does it mean to you to

be "transformed?"

Session 13: The Journey of Transformation

Isaiah 64:8

"Yet, O LORD, you are our Father. We are the clay, you are the potter; we are all the work of your hand."

Romans 12:1-3

"Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God - this is your spiritual act of worship.² Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is – his good, pleasing and perfect will. ³ For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you."

2 Corinthians 3:16-18

"But whenever anyone turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. ¹⁷ Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. ¹⁸ And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit."

Transformation

The abundant life that Jesus is calling us to doesn't just happen right away. It involves a process of becoming more like Him by becoming more submitted to His guidance and empowering presence.

Our Need for Transformation: Understanding "The Gap"

This is the gap that God wants to close - the difference between where you are and where He wants you to be: His Vision for your life. Many Christians try to do it like we do many other things: all on our own. However, transformation requires a life-on-life process where first you submit yourself to God and then to others.

Marriage / Friendships / Parenting / Talents / Finances / Work

God Cares

enough to help

ou close the Gap

Understanding the Gap

God's Vision for our lives - Perfection

The

Gap

Reality

Life Spring Network



Remember:

Transformation is not a solo project. It is a journey that requires the community of faith.

Reflective Question: What characteristics of the narrow road do you find in this text?



The Road of Life¹⁰

God says

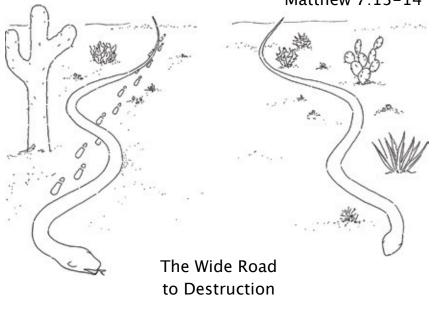
it is OKAY

and Not OKAY

Matthew 7:13-14

"Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. ¹⁴ But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life and only a few find it."

The Wide Road to Destruction



Matthew 7:13-14

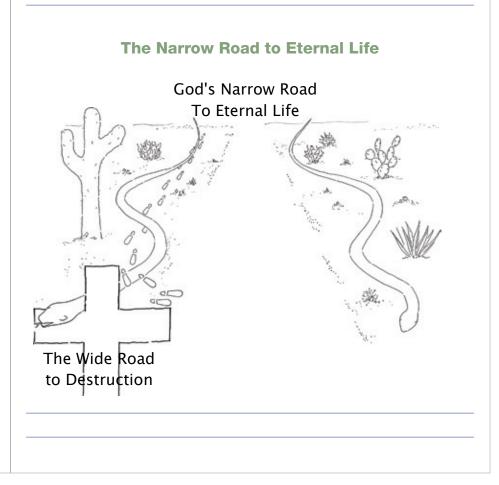
Reflective Question: *What makes the wide road enticing*?

The Wide Road to Destruction, continued

The wide road reflects the world's system that ultimately leads to destruction. We are all on a journey and we all have decisions to make along that journey. The road of life is difficult because we have an enemy who tries to distract us from finding the abundant, balanced, Spirit-led life for which we were created.

Ephesians 6:12-13

"For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. ¹³ Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand."



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"When we choose this new path our destiny is sealed...not because of what we have done...but because of what He has done for us." – Jason Pankau

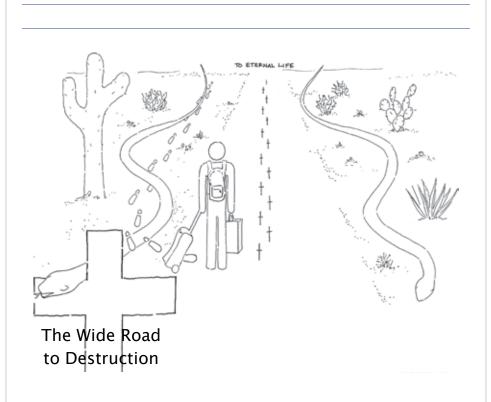
Remember:

Before Christianity was known as "Christianity" it was known as "The Way."



The Turning Point

Before we accept Christ, we are all moving along the path toward destruction. Some are farther along the road than others. Christians are people who have come to the reality that we are the problem and that we are in need of God's grace to help us find our purpose for living. When we ask Jesus Christ to come into our lives and be our Lord, we die to our old lives, repent (or turn) and begin to follow God. This is when we embark on the narrow road that leads to eternal life.



The New "Way"

Once we have received God's free gift of grace, God shuts the door on our old destiny, and begins His transformation process. We all bring in our fair share of baggage that needs to be discarded over time. The good news is that we have an example in Jesus of how to live our lives. The key is to study His life of love and follow in His footsteps. We can study the way He lived and loved and went through life and replicate that "way," and experience more abundant life as we do so.

Remember:

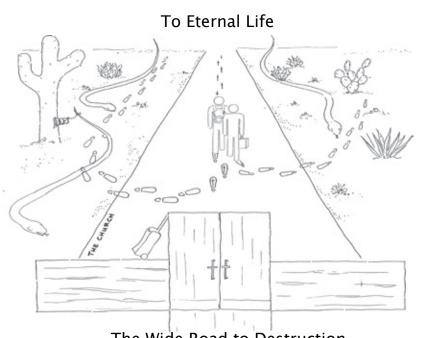
The 7 G's: Groups provide the optimal environment for life change.

The Role of the Church

On the journey, off-ramps (our own baggage and the influence of the evil one) exist that we may be tempted to take. The love and nurture of the church can help bring us back to God and strengthen our resolve.

The evil one loves to get us to try to do it all on our own because when we're isolated it's easier to get us to choose an off-ramp. The good news is that God tells us that whenever two or three are gathered in His name, we have the power to resist the temptations of the evil one. The community of faith is the essence of this kind of corporate support.

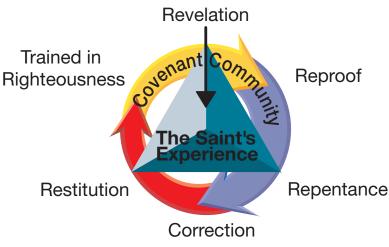
As God uses His Church to mature us, our lives will begin to look more and more like the life of Jesus. In order to experience transformation we need to submit ourselves to the Church and to this process.



The Wide Road to Destruction

Reflective Question: What is your favorite way to study the life of Christ?

The Cycle of Renewal



Reflective Question:

How have you seen this cycle at work in your own life?

"Sometimes when it looks like your life is falling apart, God is simply trying to reconstruct the foundation upon which He can build a masterpiece." – Jason Pankau

"Sometimes God sends more revelation...for me sometimes it is in the form of a 2 X 4." – Jason Pankau



2 Timothy 3:16-17

"All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, ¹⁷ so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work."

Revelation

Revelation from God leads the process.

Reproof or Rebuke

Reproof challenges our status quo.

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Repentance

We can either agree with God and turn (repent) or disagree and, in essence, say "No. I don't think you know better. I think I know better." Sometimes God sends more revelation.

Correction

This decision to change is followed by figuring out the appropriate corrections needed. The Biblical term here is actually a forensic term for resetting a bone.

Restitution

We make restitution for our sins by asking for forgiveness from those we have sinned against and behaving in accordance with the new directional correction. The process is short-circuited if you don't submit yourself to community.

Trained in Righteousness

Healing comes as part of your being Trained in Righteousness, which is a main goal of the faith. Without training we will drift a totally different way: toward selfishness and decline. Once you get a taste of God's training, you'll desire it more and more.

Put off the Old Nature...and Put on the New

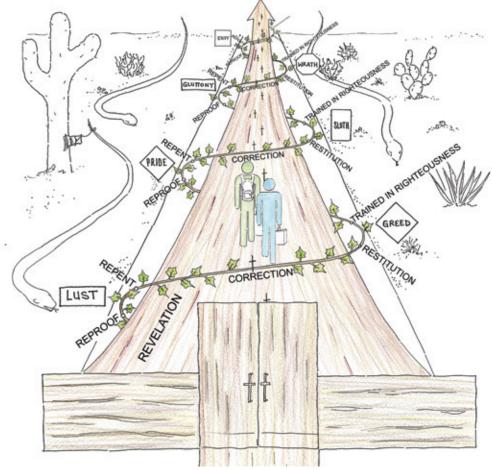
In Christ we are new creations. It takes time to learn to walk in this new life in Christ. It is a journey and a process of being trained in righteousness.

"If you're not being trained by God then you're being trained by the world." – Jason Pankau

The Cycle of Renewal and the Road of Life

We go through several Cycles of Renewal as God grows us up in Him. We grow in our ability to experience and express love - this is the marker of our maturity in faith. All along the way, our growth process will be opposed by the evil one and his influence in the world, so we should be prepared for a battle! But it is a battle for which God both prepares and equips us.

To Eternal Life



The Wide Road

To Destruction

Summary

In this session we discussed:

- LFP Level 2: Commit to Transformation
- Law 9: The Law of Transformation
- The Road of Life
- The Cycle of Renewal

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Discussion and Reflection

1. The Law of Transformation: What are the implications of this law for your life? Describe your journey with submitting to the guidance and power of God.

2. Where do you find yourself on the Road of Life? Can you describe what it was like for you to be confronted by the cross of Jesus, offered the choice of new life and decided to follow Him as your Lord?

3. How is your church community functioning as the guard rails along the journey and being used by God to facilitate the process of transformation in your life?

4. Does the pattern of your life follow the Cycle of Renewal? How are you short circuiting this process of being trained in righteousness?

5. What does the process of seeking restitution with others look like in your life? What makes it difficult for you to seek restitution?

6. How do you help others walk the Road of Life and engage God's transformational process?

7. What Scripture verses stood out to you most and why?

Session 14 Choosing to Transform

In this session participants will:

Cognitive (Knowing Objectives)

- Recognize how attitudes based on the Promises of God bring focus to the journey of transformation.
- Affective (Feeling Objectives) • Be assured of the Promises of God.

Behavioral (Doing Objectives)

• Study the Promises of God and Godly Attitudes and compare and contrast your life with Godly Attitudes.

Existential (Lifelong Objectives)

• Adopt Godly Attitudes that line up with the Attitudes seen in and encouraged by Christ.



OMEGA Session 14: Choosing to Transform Life Spring Network Review In Session 13 we discussed: • LFP Level 2: Commit to Transformation • Law 9: The Law of Transformation The Road of Life • • The Cycle of Renewal Life Focus Process Level 2: Commit to Transformation For more resources, thoughts, and discussion about this session, please visit www.lifespringnetwork.org Commit to Transformation **Discipleship and Reality** Clarify God's Mission for Our Lives Law 10: The Law of Attitude Choosing Godly Attitudes brings focus to the journey of transformation and prepares us to experience and express love abundantly in any situation. Attitudes are advance decisions about how we are going to desire, feel, think and act. [Philippians 2:1-11, Matthew 5:1-12]

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The Attitude of Jesus: Philippians 2:1-11

"If you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, ² then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose. [Grace] ³ Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. [Group] ⁴Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. [Good Stewardship] ⁵ Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: ⁶ Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped [**Growth**], ⁷ but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant [Gifts], being made in human likeness. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death [Guidance] - even death on a cross! 9 Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰ that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹ and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" [Glorification].

The Beatitudes: Matthew 5:1-12

The Beatitudes describe the attitudes that form Godly character over time. We create attitudes when we engage in advanced decision-making.

Reflective Question:

In what ways have you seen the power of attitude in your own life?

Matthew 5:1-12

"Now when he saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him, 2 and he began to teach them, saying:

³ "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.	Glorification	I will be humble before God and serve His purposes in the world whether I am viewed as a success or a failure in the world's eyes.
⁴ Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.	Group	I will stay sensitive to the pain in my life and in the world, care for people in and out of God's family.
⁵ Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.	Gifts and Grace in Action	I will embrace and endure injury without self-pity or having to retaliate in kind. I will maintain perspective in the stressful heat of injury and be graceful.
⁶ Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.	Growth	I will keep my desires focused on doing the will of God, growing to full maturity in Christ and resisting tempting distractions.
⁷ Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.	Grace and Good Stewardship	I will serve the poor and steward the resources God has given me wisely and mercifully as He leads and as I see people in need.
⁸ Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.	Guidance	I will seek after God's Holy Ways – no matter how hard or unpopular it gets.
⁹ Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God.	Gifts and Grace in Action	I will come alongside people in conflict and aid them in the process of reconciliation.
¹⁰ Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. ¹¹ "Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. ¹² Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you."	Gifts and Grace in Action	I will love my enemies in the power of the Holy Spirit and lay down my life so they might know God's love.

Godly Attitudes are based on the Promises of God

If our attitudes are advanced decisions about how we are going to desire, feel, think and act in any situation, then we need to base these attitudes on a sure foundation. We can decide in advance to trust in what God has promised.

The Seven Values of Abundant Living and the Promises of God

See Appendix G for a fuller treatment of the Promises of God and the 7G's

Guidance

God promises His Guidance to those who submit themselves to His Lordship and follow Him.

Matthew 7:7-8 - "Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. ⁸For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened."

Proverbs 3:5-6 - "Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; ⁶ in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight."

Isaiah 42:16 - "I will lead the blind by ways they have not known, along unfamiliar paths I will guide them; I will turn the darkness into light before them and make the rough places smooth. These are the things I will do; I will not forsake them."

Growth

God promises to train and transform earnest disciples of God's righteous life.

2 Corinthians 7:1 - "Since we have these promises, dear friends, let us purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God."

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1 Timothy 4:8 - "For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come."

Psalm 25:8 - "Good and upright is the LORD; therefore he instructs sinners in his ways."

Grace

God promises His forgiveness to those who repent and live as His ambassadors of reconciliation in the world.

John 14:18 - "I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you."

2 Chronicles 7:14 - "If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land."

Proverbs 28:13 - "He who conceals his sins does not prosper, but whoever confesses and renounces them finds mercy."

Mark 11:26 - "And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive him, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins."

Good Stewardship

God promises His provision to those who depend on Him and steward life wisely.

Hebrews 13:5 - "Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you."





Matthew 6:31-33 - "So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear? ³² For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. ³³ But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well."

Psalm 34:10 - "The lions may grow weak and hungry, but those who seek the LORD lack no good thing."

Glorification

God promises to glorify Himself through reverent worshippers who serve His purposes!

John 14:12-14 - "I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. ¹³ And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father. ¹⁴ You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it."

Romans 8:17 - "Now if we are children, then we are heirs – heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory."

Gifts

God promises His empowerment and protection to those who surrender to Him and serve through His Strength.

Psalm 37:39-40 - "The salvation of the righteous comes from the LORD; he is their stronghold in time of trouble. ⁴⁰ The LORD helps them and delivers them; he delivers them from the wicked and saves them, because they take refuge in him."

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Isaiah 40:31 - "but those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint."

Acts 1:8 - "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

Group

God promises His love, peace and presence to members of His Family.

Ephesians 3:6 - "This mystery is that through the gospel the Gentiles are heirs together with Israel, members together of one body, and sharers together in the promise in Christ Jesus."

Isaiah 54:10 - "Though the mountains be shaken and the hills be removed, yet my unfailing love for you will not be shaken nor my covenant of peace be removed," says the LORD, who has compassion on you."

Matthew 28:19-20 - "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."



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The Seven Values of Abundant Living, The Promises of God and Godly Attitudes

7 G's	The Promises of God	Godly Attitude
Guidance	God Promises His guidance to those who submit themselves to His Lordship and follow Him.	I have decided that I need God's guidance in every aspect of my life and will live as His follower.
Growth	God promises to train and transform earnest disciples of God's righteous life.	I have decided that I will live as a disciple, striving to become more like Jesus in every area of my life.
Grace	God promises His forgiveness to those who repent and live as His ambassadors in the world.	I have decided that I will receive God's grace for my life and live as His ambassador of reconciliation in the world.
Good Stewardship	God promises His provision to those who depend on Him and steward life wisely.	I have decided that life is a gift of time, talents and treasure that I will gratefully steward as God leads.
Glorification	God promises to glorify himself through reverent worshippers who serve His purposes!	I have decided to live as a worshipper and glorify God in every aspect of my life.
Gifts	God promises His empowerment and protection to those who surrender to Him and serve through His strength.	I have decided to live every day as an empowered servant, allowing God to express His love through me.
Group	God promises His love, peace and presence to members of His family.	I have decided to live in covenant community as a member of God's family and welcome in all who desire to join.

Summary

In this session we discussed:

- LFP Level 2: Commit to Transformation
- Law 10: The Law of Attitude
- The Seven Values of Abundant Living and the Promises of God

Discussion and Reflection Questions

1. Law of Attitude: What are the implications of this law for your life?

2. What are the prevalent attitudes that dominate your decision-making and behavior these days?

3. What aspects of Philippians 2 and the Beatitudes stood out to you the most and why?

4. What aspects of God's promises stood out to you the most and why?

5. Using the 7 G's as a comparison model, what attitude adjustments do you need to make in order to fully engage in the process of transformation?

6. Which Scripture verses stood out to you and why?

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In this session participants will:

Cognitive (Knowing Objectives) • Grasp the reality picture of spiritual warfare.

Affective (Feeling Objectives)

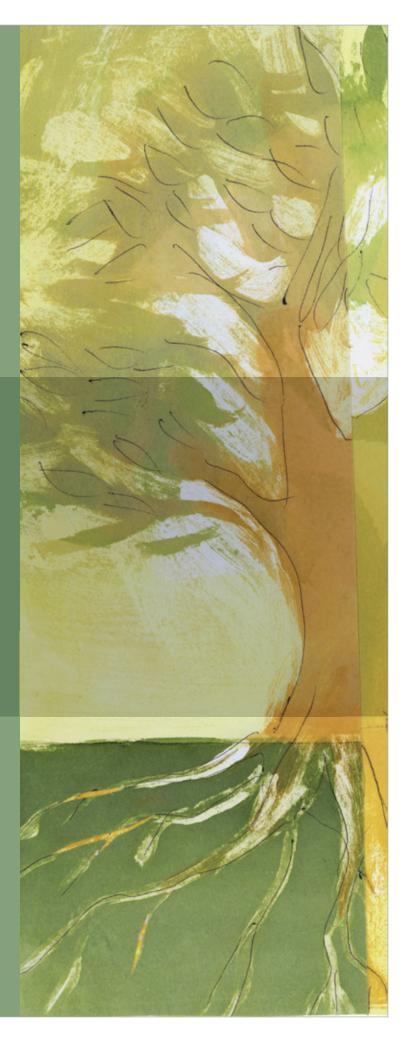
• Be encouraged by the abundance of spiritual authority and blessings that are rightfully ours as children of God.

Behavioral (Doing Objectives)

• Submit yourself to God's guidance and power while maintaining unity in the Church through forgiveness and reconciliation.

Existential (Lifelong Objectives)

• Overcome the entrapments and pitfalls of the enemy through prayer, surrender, unity and corporate alignment with God's provision.





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In session 14 we discussed:

- LFP Level 2: Commit to Transformation
- Law 10: The Law of Attitude
- The Seven Values of Abundant Living and the Promises of God

Commit to Transformation

Clarify God's Mission for Our Lives

Our sinful nature combined with the influence of evil in the world co-conspire to lead us away from God, but God has provided all we need to stand against these forces and realize His abundant life.

Law 11: The Law of Reality

[The Book of Ephesians; Romans 7 & 8]

Life Focus Process Level 2: Commit to Transformation





Our sinful nature provides us with the tendency to want to do our will over the will of the Father. When we try to do otherwise, we often try to do it (or at least some portion of it) on our own. However, as Jesus observes, apart from Him we "can do nothing" (John 15:5b).

Remember:

Living life in the "flesh" keeps us trapped in the Cycle of Grief. Life lived in the "Spirit" enables us to enter the Cycle of Grace.

We are Spiritual People

As we discussed earlier, being "spiritual" means that we have the ability to will, desire, and to want. The "evil one" attacks our desire to do the will of God

- Directly or
- Indirectly (through another)

deceiving us from experiencing the abundant life in Christ, whereas, the Holy Spirit is ENCOURAGING us and as we abide in Him EMPOWERING us to follow God's will.

Romans 7:19-25

"For what I do is not the good I want to do; no, the evil I do not want to do – this I keep on doing. ²⁰ Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it. ²¹ So I find this law at work: When I want to do good, evil is right there with me. ²² For in my inner being I delight in God's law; ²³ but I see another law at work in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within my members. ²⁴ What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? ²⁵ Thanks be to God – through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself in my mind am a slave to God's law, but in the sinful nature a slave to the law of sin."

Romans Chapter 8 goes on to talk about what life in the Spirit looks like according to God's will.... The Spirit of God is ENCOURAGING us and, as we abide in God, EMPOWERING us to follow God's will. Hence, the struggle.

The old cartoon Tom and Jerry depicts this as an angel and demon on opposite shoulders speaking into our ears trying to influence us.

Reflective Question: At what point do you most feel the influence of God in your life?

The Reality Picture of Spiritual Warfare¹¹

As you see in the verses in Romans, there is a tug-of-war going on in the universe over you. The enemy's goal is to steal, kill and destroy. God, however, has other plans. Who will influence you more? To end up where God wants you to be, it's important to get a real picture of what is happening in the "heavenly realms" and understand what part God wants you to play in it.

The paradigm and diagrams in this section are adapted from Ed Silvoso's book, *That None Should Perish*, which details how to reach entire cities for Christ through prayer.

Silvoso points out that the book of Ephesians provides a road map of the heavenlies through five different references. Each one represents a move by God that eventually leads to cosmic checkmate.

The First Reference has to do with the Father

Ephesians 1:3-6

"Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. ⁴ For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love ⁵ he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will – ⁶ to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves."



Reflective Question:

How does this text encourage you?

Remember:

"...the eyes of your heart" reflect what you really want or desire.



God has seeded the heavenly places with every spiritual blessing. We have all we need to thrive.

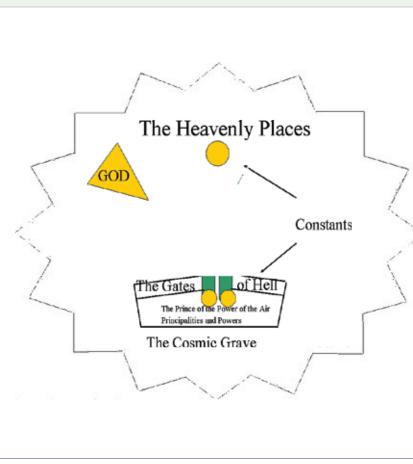
The Second Reference has to do with Jesus

Ephesians 1:18-23

"I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, ¹⁹ and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is like the working of his mighty strength, ²⁰ which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, ²¹ far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. ²² And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, ²³ which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way."

Reflective Question: What does it mean to be "alive" in Christ?





God applied a one-two punch by sending Jesus first to the lowest parts of Satan's kingdom (see Ephesians 4:9). On the way out of the grave, Jesus took with Him the keys to Hades and death, thus eliminating the effectiveness of the padlock that formerly secured the gates of hell (see Ephesians 4:8; Hebrews 2:14-15; Revelation 1:18) and confined the prince of the power of the air, along with his principalities and powers, under the feet of Jesus (see Ephesians 1:22; 1 Peter 3:22).

The second punch placed Jesus in the highest possible place, at the right hand of God, and established Him as head of the Church (see Ephesians 1:18-22; 4:8).

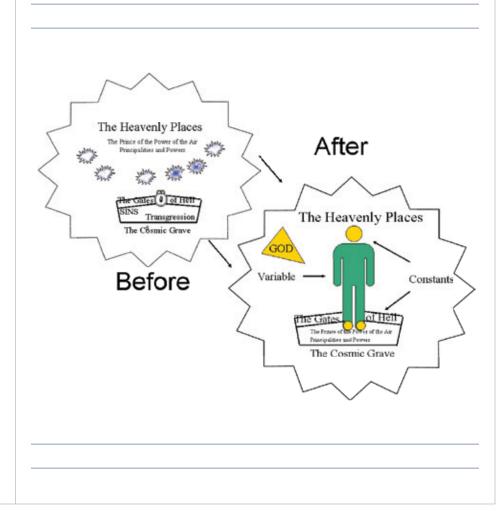
The head and the feet are in place, the only thing missing is the body! That's where we come in.



The Third Reference has to do with the Church

Ephesians 2:1-7

"As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, ² in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. ³ All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature objects of wrath. ⁴ But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, ⁵ made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions – it is by grace you have been saved. ⁶ And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, ⁷ in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus."



Figuratively speaking, God now proceeded to effect the largest transfer of "building material" in the entire history of the universe. He did it by moving human beings (sinners) from Satan's grave into the heavenly places, where He seated them (as saints) there with Jesus (see Ephesians 2:6). No longer could the gates of hell prevail against God's command (See Matthew 16:18).

The roles that God plays, the head and the feet, are constants in this cosmic equation. Furthermore, the destiny of the evil one is sealed. We (individuals making up the Church - the Body) are the variables. We are what God and the evil one are fighting over. Being made in the image of God, we are despised by the evil one. He will try any conceivable way to separate us from God and the Body to isolate us and bring us down.

The Fourth Reference has to do with Principalities and Powers

Ephesians 3:7-12

"I became a servant of this gospel by the gift of God's grace given me through the working of his power. ⁸ Although I am less than the least of all God's people, this grace was given me: to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, ⁹ and to make plain to everyone the administration of this mystery, which for ages past was kept hidden in God, who created all things. ¹⁰ His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms, ¹¹ according to his eternal purpose which he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord. ¹² In him and through faith in him we may approach God with freedom and confidence."

Reflective Question:

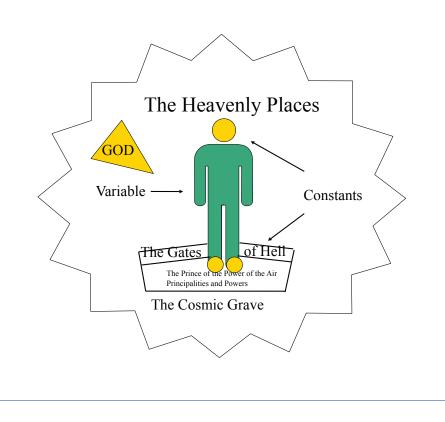
Is it the norm that you approach God with "freedom and confidence?"



Remember:

Wisdom is knowledge applied to life that makes life work, the way it is supposed to work.

Reflective Question: In what relationships might God be asking you to make sure "grace is in place?"



God established the Church in the heavenly places as both an example and a witness to the principalities and powers. God did this, "in order that the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known through the church to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly places" (Ephesians 3:10). The manifold wisdom of God is God's plan of salvation through the grace of Christ. We make it known both by example (expressing Grace to one another) and by declaring it to the spirit world, declaring to the powers their defeat by Christ and our authority in His name to claim lost souls for the kingdom of God. It's not an individual thing - it's a community of people doing it together. The evil one doesn't like this. Therefore, he focuses on dividing the unity of the church – to keep us from really serving one another.

Reflective Question:

What does "putting on the full armor of God" look like in your life?



Satan's Weapons: Lies, Deception and Anger triggered by Unwholesome Words

When we get angry with each other and deprive each other of grace, we invalidate our testimony. The trigger is usually unwholesome words. We therefore need to do everything possible in our strength to reconcile with one another. Unless we quickly apply grace to our anger, we will fall victim to the devil's schemes and allow him to divide us. We also need to be able to humbly ask for forgiveness when we wrong someone else, and accept the forgiveness of those who wrong us.

When we have a humble heart of unity and seek reconciliation through grace, God is able to deliver us from the evil one. Unity, Forgiveness, Truth, Grace and Love are what make the Church truly powerful and able to rule the heavenly realms, where the battle is raging for the souls of humanity.

Ephesians 4:25-32

"Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to his neighbor, for we are all members of one body. ²⁶ "In your anger do not sin": Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, ²⁷ and do not give the devil a foothold. ²⁸ He who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with his own hands, that he may have something to share with those in need. ²⁹ Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. ³⁰ And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. ³¹ Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. ³² Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you."

The Fifth Reference has to do with the Struggle between the Church and Principalities and Powers

Ephesians 6:10-12

"Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. ¹¹ Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. ¹² For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms."

The Church has now been placed as potentially in control of the heavenly places once ruled by the prince of the power of the air. But the Church must engage and defeat the enemy to retake the heavenlies in the name of our Lord, so that the eyes of those still being held captive by Satan will be opened.

Satan's only option is to try to deceive the Church, God's agent on earth, into yielding to him what has been entrusted to our care by God, much like what he did to Eve, and then to Adam, in the garden. Like Adam and Eve, we may be tempted to rationalize our behavior when it goes awry. However, when we do that, we don't claim God's truth for our lives, and we allow Satan jurisdiction over our testimony.

Reflective Question:

What is an example of something that you do in relationships to keep the enemy from gaining a "foothold?"

The Reality Picture of Spiritual Warfare Summary

- The battleground is the heavenly places.
- Whoever controls the heavenly places, wins.
- The Church must take its position in Christ in the heavenlies and defend against Satan's counterattack.
- Satan's counterattack is aimed at fragmenting the unity of the Church through unresolved anger and wrath directed at each other. This creates jurisdictions in the heavenly places for Satan to exercise authority conceded to him by the Church. If unity is compromised, the credibility of the Church and the effectiveness of its message are diminished.
- Voiding those jurisdictions is the first step toward bringing the Church to full strength for the purpose of reaching any city for Christ.

Ephesians 6:13-18

"Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. ¹⁴ Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, ¹⁵ and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. ¹⁶ In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. ¹⁷ Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. ¹⁸And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints.

Reflective Question:

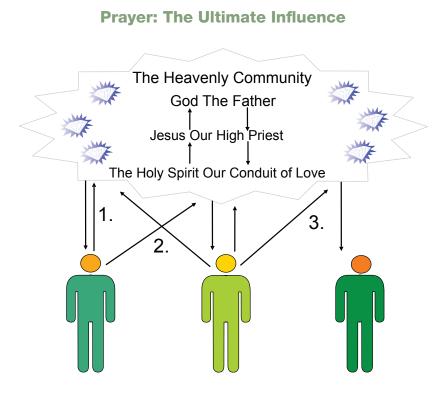
Which piece of the Full Armor of God is easiest for you to "put on?"

"A prayerless Christian is like a bus driver trying alone to push his bus out of a ditch because he doesn't know Clark Kent is on board. If you knew, you would ask." – John Piper

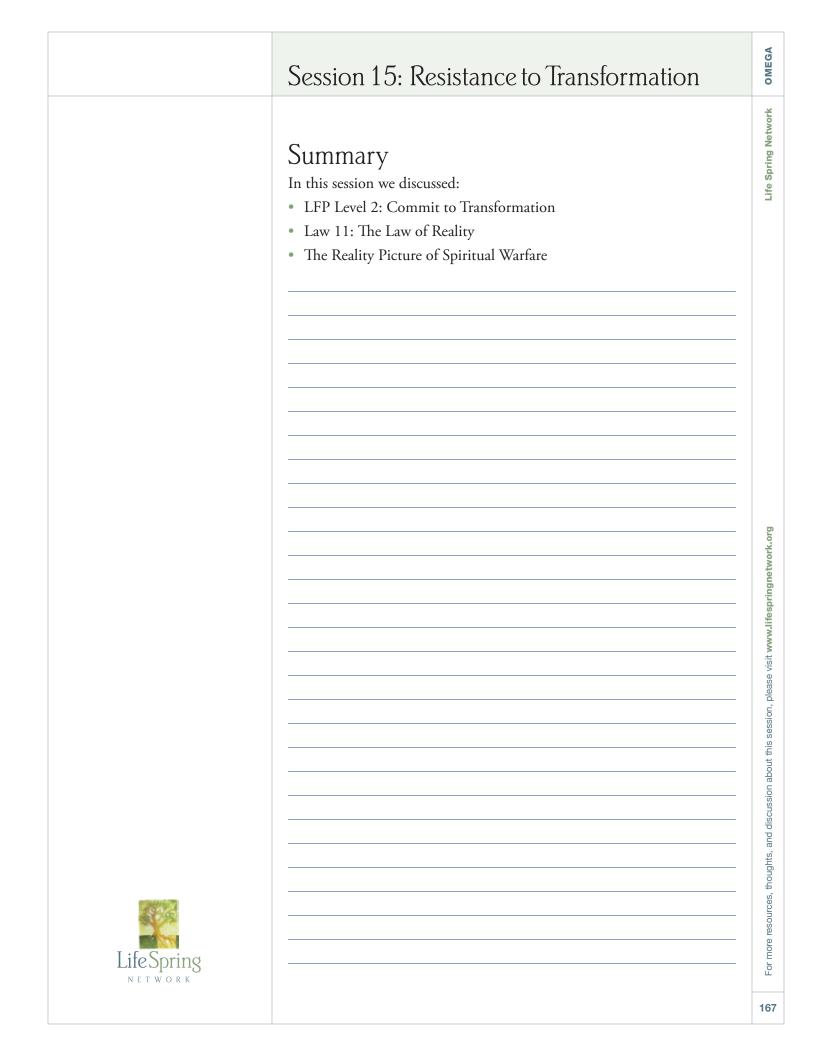


The Seven Values of Abundant Living and the Full Armor of God

7 G's	The Full Armor of God
Guidance	The Belt of Truth
Growth	The Breastplate of Righteousness
Grace	Gospel of Peace
Good Stewardship	The Shield of Faith
Glorification	The Helmet of Salvation
Gifts	The Sword of the Spirit
Group	Always keep on praying for all the saints



In the space below write down the names of people God is prompting you to pray for!



Discussion and Reflection

1. The Law of Reality: What are the implications of this law for your life?

2. Does the reality picture of Spiritual Warfare make sense to you? Which aspect of it stood out to you?

3. What new insights or thoughts have been sparked as a result of looking at this paradigm?

4. Do you understand why Satan's attack is aimed at fragmenting the unity of the church?

5. How have you experienced this attack or allowed Satan to affect your ability to experience and express love?

6. What Scripture verses stood out to you most and why?



In this session participants will:

Cognitive (Knowing Objectives)

• Grasp the consequences of blessings and curses on the journey of transformation and learn how to deal with sin in the church.

Affective (Feeling Objectives)

• Feel free as you receive God's guidance and power healing you from the impact of curses in your life.

Behavioral (Doing Objectives)

 Identify curses that have been spoken over you or that you have brought upon yourself through disobedience and break them in the power of God.

Existential (Lifelong Objectives)

• Firmly root yourself in the journey of transformation by regularly confessing sin and obediently following God's blessed plan for your life.





Review

In session 15 we discussed:

- LFP Level 2: Commit to Transformation
- Law 11: The Law of Reality
- The Reality Picture of Spiritual Warfare

Life Focus Process Level 2: Commit to Transformation

Commit to Transformation Discipleship and Reality

Clarify God's Mission for Our Lives

Law 12: The Law of Consequences

Actions taken and words spoken have profound consequences on our journey of transformation, either blessing or cursing our lives and the lives of those we touch. [Deuteronomy 30:15-20, Galatians 6:7-10]

Deuteronomy 30:15-20

¹⁵ See, I set before you today life and prosperity, death and destruction. ¹⁶For I command you today to love the LORD your God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commands, decrees and laws; then you will live and increase, and the LORD your God will bless you in the land you are entering to possess. ¹⁷ But if your heart turns away and you are not OMEGA

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obedient, and if you are drawn away to bow down to other gods and worship them, ¹⁸ I declare to you this day that you will certainly be destroyed. You will not live long in the land you are crossing the Jordan to enter and possess. ¹⁹ This day I call heaven and earth as witnesses against you that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live ²⁰ and that you may love the LORD your God, listen to his voice, and hold fast to him. For the LORD is your life, and he will give you many years in the land he swore to give to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob."

Blessings and Curses¹²

Definitions

Both blessings and curses are impartations of spiritual power, one for the positive and one for the negative. They can both come about as a result of words spoken or actions taken by oneself or others.

Blessings

Blessings come into our lives when other people bless us or when we enter into blessing through stepping into the revealed will of God through obedience. We choose to curse our own lives through disobedience.

Causes of Curses

1. Words, Labels, and Predictions

These can become tapes that we play in our heads, ultimately forming an identity that is not accurate or true.

OR

Through the power of God we can break these tapes and replace them with tapes of the truth of God and what HE says about you – who you are and who HE made you to be.

Reflective Question: Why do you think words carry such an enormous weight?

Proverbs 11:11

"Through the blessing of the upright a city is exalted, but by the mouth of the wicked it is destroyed."

A Definition

Curse:

To speak down to, disempower or discourage one from following the will of God.



"Reckless words pierce like a sword, but the tongue of the wise brings healing."

James 3:3-12

"When we put bits into the mouths of horses to make them obey us, we can turn the whole animal. ⁴ Or take ships as an example. Although they are so large and are driven by strong winds, they are steered by a very small rudder wherever the pilot wants to go. ⁵ Likewise the tongue is a small part of the body, but it makes great boasts. Consider what a great forest is set on fire by a small spark. ⁶ The tongue also is a fire, a world of evil among the parts of the body. It corrupts the whole person, sets the whole course of his life on fire, and is itself set on fire by hell. ⁷ All kinds of animals, birds, reptiles and creatures of the sea are being tamed and have been tamed by man, ⁸ but no man can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison. 9 With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in God's likeness. ¹⁰ Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers, this should not be. ¹¹ Can both fresh water and salt (bitter) water flow from the same spring? ¹² My brothers, can a fig tree bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? Neither can a salt spring produce fresh water."



If we are truly operating in the Spirit, we cannot curse. If this happens... it serves as an obvious sign that we have stepped out of it in some way and something else is going on. We need to take stock quickly because the damage we can do in this state can have eternal consequences and we can invalidate our testimony to the world as God's community of love.

Dealing with Sin in the Church

Jesus has provided us a model of how to confront one another and move towards healing, reconciliation and peace in Matthew 18:15-20.

By moving through this process with one another we can reverse the effects of the curse that has been brought to bear on our lives through one another's sins and maintain the unity of the Church through forgiveness, healing and restoration of trust as we move towards reconciliation.

Matthew 18:15-20

¹⁵ "If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over. ¹⁶ But if he will not listen, take one or two others along, so that 'every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.' ¹⁷ If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, treat him as you would a pagan or a tax collector. ¹⁸ "I tell you the truth, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. ¹⁹ "Again, I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. ²⁰ For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them."

Reflective Question:

Which one of these causes of curses seems to be most prevalent in our society? Why?



Causes of Curses (continued)

Session 16: Blessings and Curses

2. Disobedience

We curse our lives when we choose to live in ways that are disobedient to God's will and guidance for our lives.

Deuteronomy 27:15-26

"Cursed is the man who carves an image or casts an idol - a thing detestable to the LORD, the work of the craftsman's hands - and sets it up in secret." Then all the people shall say, "Amen!" ¹⁶ "Cursed is the man who dishonors his father or his mother." Then all the people shall say, "Amen!" ¹⁷ "Cursed is the man who moves his neighbor's boundary stone." Then all the people shall say, "Amen!" 18 "Cursed is the man who leads the blind astray on the road." Then all the people shall say, "Amen!" ¹⁹ "Cursed is the man who withholds justice from the alien, the fatherless or the widow." Then all the people shall say, "Amen" ²⁰ "Cursed is the man who sleeps with his father's wife, for he dishonors his father's bed." Then all the people shall say, "Amen!" ²¹ "Cursed is the man who has sexual relations with any animal." Then all the people shall say, "Amen!" ²² "Cursed is the man who sleeps with his sister, the daughter of his father or the daughter of his mother." Then all the people shall say, "Amen!" ²³ "Cursed is the man who sleeps with his mother-in-law." Then all the people shall say, "Amen!" ²⁴ "Cursed is the man who kills his neighbor secretly." Then all the people shall say, "Amen!" ²⁵ "Cursed is the man who accepts a bribe to kill an innocent person." Then all the people shall say, "Amen!" ²⁶ "Cursed is the man who does not uphold the words of this law by carrying them out." Then all the people shall say, "Amen!"

- Idolatry (Deuteronomy 27:15)
- Disrespect of Parents (Deuteronomy 27:16)
- Dishonesty/Greed (Deuteronomy 27:17)
- Harming the Helpless and Weak (Deuteronomy 27:18-19)
- Sexual Immorality (Deuteronomy 27:20-23)
- Hatred/Murder ((Deuteronomy 27:24-25)
- Hypocrisy and Disobedience to the Word (Deuteronomy 27:26)

Pride

Jeremiah 17:5-6

"This is what the LORD says: 'Cursed is the one who trusts in man, who depends on flesh for his strength and whose heart turns away from the LORD. ⁶ He will be like a bush in the wastelands; he will not see prosperity when it comes. He will dwell in the parched places of the desert, in a salt land where no one lives.'"

Religion

Galatians 3:10-14

"All who rely on observing the law are under a curse, for it is written: "Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the Book of the Law. ¹¹ Clearly no one is justified before God by the law, because, "The righteous will live by faith." ¹² The law is not based on faith; on the contrary, "The man who does these things will live by them." ¹³ Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: "Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree." ¹⁴ He redeemed us in order that the blessing given to Abraham might come to the Gentiles through Christ Jesus, so that by faith we might receive the promise of the Spirit."

Unrighteous Stewardship

Haggai 1:4-6

"Is it a time for you yourselves to be living in your paneled houses, while this house remains a ruin?' ⁵ Now this is what the LORD Almighty says: 'Give careful thought to your ways. ⁶ You have planted much, but have harvested little. You eat, but never have enough. You drink, but never have your fill. You put on clothes, but are not warm. You earn wages, only to put them in a purse with holes in it.'"

Malachi 3:8-10

"Will a man rob God? Yet you rob me. "But you ask, 'How do we rob you?' "In tithes and offerings. ⁹ You are under a curse – the whole nation of you – because you are robbing me. ¹⁰ Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this," says the LORD Almighty, "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it."

The Seven Values of Abundant Living and the Curses of Disobedience

7 G's	The Curses of Disobedience
Guidance	Idolatry - Deuteronomy 27:15
Group	Disrespect of Parents - Deuteronomy 27:16 Sexual Immorality - Deuteronomy 27:20-23
Good Stewardship	Dishonesty/Greed; Unrighteous Stewardship - Haggai 1:4-6, Malachi 3:8-10
Grace	Harming the helpless and weak - Deuteronomy 27:18-19 Hatred/Murder - Deuteronomy 27:24-25
Growth	Hypocrisy and Disobedience to the Word - Deuteronomy 27:26
Glorification	Pride - Jeremiah 17:5-6
Gifts	Religion – Galatians 3:10

Summary

In this session we discussed:

- LFP Level 2: Commit to Transformation
- Law 12: The Law of Consequences
- Blessings and Curses



Discussion and Reflection

1. Law of Consequence: What are the implications of this law for your life?

2. What is your experience with blessings and curses in your life?

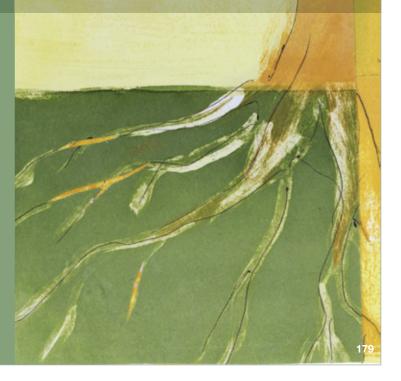
3. What in Matthew 18:15 stood out to you the most and how will you handle conflict with others in the church differently as a result?

4. What curses came to mind that you feel might still be holding you back from experiencing God's abundant life for you?

5. What curses of disobedience stood out that you never considered before?

6. What Scripture verses stood out to you most and why?

Session 17 Realizing Life's Potential



In this session participants will:

Cognitive (Knowing Objectives)

• Become more self-aware by learning the importance of having an objective awareness of your obedience to God's mission, character and purpose.

Affective (Feeling Objectives)

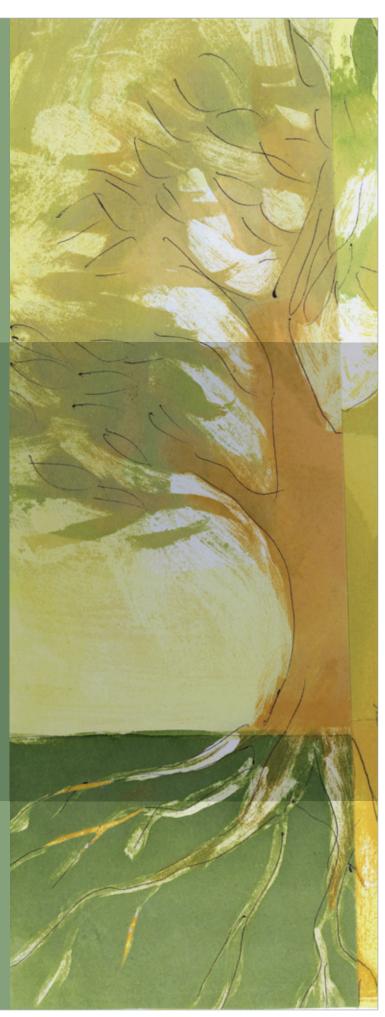
• Be inspired to discover and utilize assets that you have in the areas of Passion, Upbringing and Resources for realizing life's potential.

Behavioral (Doing Objectives)

 Assess your obedience to God's mission and your character while beginning to discover your purpose by examining your Passion, Upbringing and Resources.

Existential (Lifelong Objectives)

• Experience and express love to others in deeper and more meaningful ways by living more obediently on mission with God, developing Christlike character and living into your Passions, Upbringing and Resources.





Session 17: Realizing Life's Potential

Review

In Session 16 we discussed:

- LFP Level 2: Commit to Transformation
- Law 12: The Law of Consequences
- Blessings and Curses

Life Focus Process Level 3: Know Thyself



Law 13: The Law of Potential

Having an objective awareness of our obedience to God's mission, character and purpose is essential to realizing life's potential. [Romans 12:1-3; Philippians 4:13]



Romans 12:1-3

"Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God – this is your spiritual act of worship. ² Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is – his good, pleasing OMEGA

Session 17: Realizing Life's Potential

Reflective Question: *Does the word "potential" carry*

a good or bad connotation to you?

"Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness that most frightens us. Your playing small does not serve the world. There is nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won't feel insecure around you. We are all meant to shine as children do. It's not just in some of us; it is in everyone. And as we let our own lights shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same. As we are liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others." - From the Movie Coach Carter; this version is for all faiths, written by Marianne Williamson

and perfect will. ³ For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you."

Philippians 4:13

"I can do everything through him who gives me strength."

Know Thyself

Strengths and Weaknesses

God wants us to be fully mature, which means developing every area of our identity in Christ, not just in the roles that we naturally gravitate towards (strengths)!

As you look at your vision statements and roles, can you clearly see roles in your life that are being neglected (weaknesses)?

The Role of Assessment

Until we understand who we really are, it is difficult to set appropriate goals for our growth.

Take objective assessment tests to get a snap-shot of your character (Seven Values of Abundant Living and the 24 Character Strengths) and how you are living in obedience to God's Mission (Vision, Priorities and Roles), and to assess the various gifts, personality and love language that you have!

"Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness that most frightens us. We ask ourselves, who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented and fabulous? Actually, who are you not to be? You are a child of God. Your playing small does not serve the world. We were born to make manifest the glory of God that is within us. It's not just in some of us; it is in everyone. And as we let our own lights shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same. As we are liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others."

– Our Deepest Fear, Christian Version written by Marianne Williamson



360 degree Feedback – The best way to assess who you are, your strengths, weaknesses and opportunities for growth is to ask trusted people in your life to give you feedback and recommend ways you could improve.

Universal Character

From *Character Strengths and Virtues* by Peterson and Seligman: ¹³

Creativity	Persistence	Perspective/Wisdom
Spirituality/Purpose	Vitality	Hope/Optimism
Citizenship	Love of Learning	Bravery
Integrity	Prudence	Curiosity
Kindness	Leadership	Love of People
Fairness	Self-regulation	Forgiveness/Mercy
Social Intelligence	Gratitude	Humor
Humility/Modesty		Open Mindedness
Appreciation of Beauty and Excellence		

The Seven Values of Abundant Living and Character Strengths

7 G's	Character Strengths
Grace	Forgiveness/Mercy, Hope/Optimism, Humor
Group	Love of People, Citizenship, Kindness, Social Intelligence
Growth	Love of Learning, Persistence, Self-Regulation, Integrity
Gifts	Creativity, Bravery, Vitality
Glorification	Spirituality/Purpose, Humility/Modesty, Appreciation of Beauty and Excellence
Guidance	Perspective/Wisdom, Curiosity, Leadership, Open Mindedness
Good Stewardship	Prudence, Fairness, Gratitude

For definitions of these character strengths see Appendix H



Session 17: Realizing Life's Potential

"God will manifest himself in direct proportion to our PASSION for Him." – Jim Cymbala

Understanding Your

P.U.R.P.O.S.E.

- **P: Passions**
- U: Upbringing
- R: Resources
- P: Personality
- O: Original Abilities
- S: Spiritual Gifts
- E: Experience of Love

Understanding Your P.U.R.P.O.S.E.

Understanding your P.U.R.P.O.S.E. will help you understand how you have been purposed to Experience and Express love!

P: Passions

We have different passions that have been placed into our lives by God, and we have learned to love through our life experience. This is a true combination of Nature and Nurture.

Passion is usually a combination of three things:

- 1. People a passion for working with or helping certain people.
- 2. Place a passion to spend time or invest yourself in a location.
- 3. Action a passion to do a type of work or activity most important to you.

The dictionary defines passion as: "Compelling feeling or emotion;... a pursuit to which one is deeply devoted." Its synonyms include love, ardent affection, and zeal.

The opposite of passionate is passive: "being without response to something, not active, inert." Unlike passive people, passionate people can't remain inactive or inert in the realm of their passion. They're compelled to action.

In his book *Half Tim*e, businessman and non-profit founder Bob Buford asks, "What is your passion, the spark that needs only a little breeze to ignite into a raging fire?"

	Session 17: Realizing Life's Potential	OMEGA
	 10 Ways to Recognize It's a Passion from <i>Shifting into Higher Gear</i> by Tom Siciliano and Jeff Caliguire ¹ Your face turns red and you become animated when you talk about it. You typically find yourself curious and seek to learn more about it. You don't get tired when actively engaged with it. You could stay up late talking about it or doing it and wonder where the time went. You wouldn't need to get paid to invest time or energy in it. Others seem interested in speaking with you about it. You sometimes wonder why others are not as passionate as you about it. If you had a day off, you would enjoy engaging in it. If you were in a bookstore, you might easily gravitate toward issues that relate to the topic of your passion. 	1145 Condina Mahmuda
Understanding Your P.U.R.P.O.S.E. P: Passions U: Upbringing R: Resources P: Personality O: Original Abilities S: Spiritual Gifts	U: Upbringing - Genograms Genograms can be very useful in understanding how we have been shaped through the generations. By constructing your genogram and spending time reflecting on the relatives who have affected your life, you will be able to know yourself better and see patterns in your family.	
E: Experience of Love		

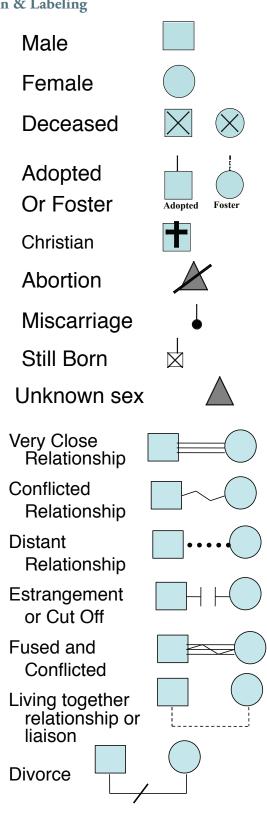
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Session 17: Realizing Life's Potential

Identification & Labeling

"When we were children, we used to think that when we were grown-up we would no longer be vulnerable. But to grow up is to accept vulnerability. To be alive is to be vulnerable." – Madeleine L'Engle



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Session 17: Realizing Life's Potential

Additional Labeling

Other information that may prove helpful in tracking through your genogram to gain a picture of your upbringing and how it has impacted and is impacting you:

- Ethnic background and migration date
- Religion or Religion Change
- Education
- Occupation or unemployment
- Military Service
- Retirement
- Trouble with the law
- Physical or sexual abuse or incest
- Obesity
- Alcohol or Drug abuse (symbol is a half-filled square or circle)
- Smoking
- Dates when family members left home: LH '74
- Current location of family members

What to look for in a Genogram:

- Generational Sin Patterns
- Health Issues
- Blessings/Curses
- Stories of Faith
- Spiritual Gifting
- Original Abilities
- Unresolved Conflict Patterns
- Love Languages



"Every man is a quotation from

all his ancestors."

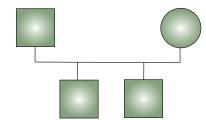
– Ralph Waldo Emerson

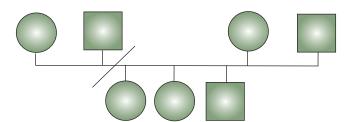
OMEGA



"Family life is full of major and minor crises – the ups and downs of health, success and failure in career, marriage, and divorce – and all kinds of characters. It is tied to places and events and histories. With all of these felt details, life etches itself into memory and personality. It's difficult to imagine anything more nourishing to the soul." – Thomas Moore

Examples





Session 17: Realizing Life's Potential

Understanding Your

P.U.R.P.O.S.E.

P: Passions

U: Upbringing

R: Resources

- P: Personality
- O: Original Abilities
- S: Spiritual Gifts
- E: Experience of Love

R: Resources

God provides each of us with different amounts of resources to steward. See Session 10: Steward of Resources.

Summary

In this session we discussed:

- Law 13: The Law of Potential
- LFP Level 3: Know Thyself: Nature Understanding Your P.U.R.P.O.S.E.

P: Passions

- U: Upbringing Genograms
- R: Resources Steward of Resources



For more resources, thoughts, and discussion about this session, please visit www.lifespringnetwork.org

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Session 17: Realizing Life's Potential

Discussion and Reflection

1. The law of Potential: What are the implications of this law for your life?

2. Which roles or aspects of your life that we have covered up to this point have you identified as areas of strength and areas of weakness? What areas are you over-focusing on and thereby neglecting others?

3. What is your best assessment of your character strengths and weaknesses? Thinking about your upbringing, how do you think you learned your greatest character strengths and weaknesses?

4. What areas of passion were you able to identify and what do you think contributes to them being such strong areas of passion for you?

5. Have you prayed about the resources God has entrusted to your care and sought His discernment about why He has blessed you with the resources that you have? If so, what strategic Kingdom impact is God having through your life in this area?

6. What Scripture verses stood out to you most and why?

In this session participants will:

Cognitive (Knowing Objectives)

 Identify and understand the various personality types, original abilities, spiritual gifts and love languages in order to understand yourself and people better in your life.

Affective (Feeling Objectives)

• Experience new levels of love through an awareness of personality, original abilities, spiritual gifts and love languages.

Behavioral (Doing Objectives)

• Reach higher levels of your potential through assessing your personality, original abilities, spiritual gifts and experience of love.

Existential (Lifelong Objectives)

• Experience and express love in deeper and more meaningful ways by understanding and pressing into each person's unique P.U.R.P.O.S.E.





Review

In Session 17 we discussed:

- Law 13: The Law of Potential
- LFP Level 3: Know Thyself: Nature Understanding Your P.U.R.P.O.S.E.
 P: Passions
 U: Upbringing - Genograms
 R: Resources - Steward of Resources

Life Focus Process Level 3: Know Thyself

Know Thyself Nature and Nurture

Commit to Transformation Discipleship and Reality

Clarify God's Mission for Our Lives (nowledge of His Vision, Priorities, Values and Identity Roles)



For more resources, thoughts, and discussion about this session, please visit www.lifespringnetwork.org

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Understanding Your

P.U.R.P.O.S.E.

P: Passions

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O: Original Abilities

S: Spiritual Gifts

E: Experience of Love

E: Extrovert

- I: Introvert
- S: Sensing
- **N: Intuitive**
- **T:** Thinking
- F: Feeling
- J: Judging
- **P:** Perceiving

"After the onset of puberty, our adult learning begins to overlay our core personality - which is when the blending of nature and nurture becomes more evident." – Jason Pankau

P: Personality

The MBTI and the Keirsey Temperament Sorter¹⁴

Population Percentages

ISTJ	ISFJ	INFJ	INTJ
11.6 %	13.8 %	1.5 %	2.1 %
ISTP	ISFP	INFP	INTP
5.4 %	8.8 %	4.4 %	3.3 %
ESTP	ESFP	ENFP	ENTP 3.2 %
4.3 %	8.5 %	8.1 %	
ESTJ	ESFJ	ENFJ 2.4 %	ENTJ
8.7 %	12.3 %		1.8 %

Keep in Mind:

In reviewing the comparisons in the inventory, you may find yourself drawn equally to opposing choices. One strategy is to think back to how you were before the age of 12. The rationale is that by the age of three, the core of our cognitive organization is well-fixed, although the brain continues to allow some plasticity until puberty. After the onset of puberty, our adult learning begins to overlay our core personality – which is when the blending of nature and nurture becomes more evident. For some people, this "learning" serves to strengthen what is already there, but with others it produces multiple facets of personality. Discovering or rediscovering this innate core of yourself is part of the journey of using your personality type to enrich your life.

Extrovert or Introvert?

Questions

- What is your most natural energy orientation?
- Where do you like to focus your attention?
- Outer world vs. Inner world?

Every person has two faces. One is directed towards the OUTER world of activities, excitements, people, and things. The other is directed inward to the INNER world of thoughts, interests, ideas, and imagination.

While these are two different but complementary sides of one's nature, most people have an innate preference towards energy from either the OUTER or INNER worlds. Thus one of their faces, either the Extroverted (E) or Introverted (I), takes the lead in their personality development and plays a more dominant role in their behavior.

Characteristics

Extroverted Characteristics:

- Act first, think/reflect later
- Feel deprived when cut off from interaction with the outside world
- Usually open to and motivated by outside world of people and things
- Enjoy wide variety and change in relationships

Introverted Characteristics:

- Think/reflect first, then act
- Regularly require an amount of "private time" to recharge batteries
- Motivated internally, mind is sometimes so active it is "closed" to the outside world
- Prefer one-to-one communication and relationships



For more resources, thoughts, and discussion about this session, please visit www.lifespringnetwork.org

OMEGA

Sensing or Intuitive?

Questions

- Which way of understanding or perceiving is most "automatic?"
- How do you like to look at things?
- Present/Concrete vs. Future/Patterns and Possibilities?

The Sensing (S) side of our brain notices the sights, sounds, smells and all the sensory details of the PRESENT. It categorizes, organizes, records and stores the specifics from the here and now. It is REALITY based, dealing with "what is." It also provides the specific details of memory and recollections from PAST events.

The Intuitive (N) side of our brain seeks to understand, interpret and form OVERALL patterns of all the information that is collected and records these patterns and relationships. It speculates on POSSIBILITIES, including looking into and forecasting the FUTURE. It is imaginative and conceptual. While both kinds of perceiving are necessary and used by all people, each of us instinctively tends to favor one over the other.

Characteristics

Sensing Characteristics:

- Mentally live in the Now, attending to present opportunities
- Using common sense and creating practical solutions is automatic/instinctual
- Memory recall is rich in detail of facts and past events
- Best improvise from past experience
- Like clear and concrete information; dislike guessing when facts are "fuzzy"

Intuitive Characteristics:

- Mentally live in the Future, attending to future possibilities
- Using imagination and creating/inventing new possibilities is automatic-instinctual
- · Memory recall emphasizes patterns, contexts, and connections
- Best improvise from theoretical understanding
- Comfortable with ambiguous, fuzzy data and guessing their meaning

Reflective Question:

How do you see understanding the personality of others most impacting your relationships?

N 111 1

Thinking or Feeling?

Questions

- Which way of forming judgments and making choices is most natural for you?
- How do you like to go about deciding things?
- Logic/Objective Analysis vs. Values/Subjective Evaluation?

The Thinking (T) side of our brain analyzes information in a DETACHED, objective fashion. It operates from factual principles, deduces and forms conclusions systematically. It is our logical nature.

The Feeling (F) side of our brain forms conclusions in an ATTACHED and somewhat global manner, based on likes/dislikes, impact on others, and human and aesthetic values. It is our subjective nature.

While everyone uses both means of forming conclusions, each person has a natural bias towards one over the other so that when they give us conflicting directions – one side is the natural trump card or tiebreaker.

Characteristics

Thinking Characteristics:

- Instinctively search for facts and logic in a decision-making situation
- Naturally notice tasks and work to be accomplished
- Easily able to provide an objective and critical analysis
- Accept conflict as a natural, normal part of relationships with people

Feeling Characteristics:

- Instinctively employ personal feelings and impact on people in decision situations
- Naturally sensitive to people's needs and reactions
- Naturally seek consensus and popular opinions
- Unsettled by conflict; have almost a toxic reaction to disharmony

Reflective Question:

Do you tend to be at the extremes or in the middle of the personality categories?



OMEGA

Judging or Perceiving?

Questions

- What is your "action orientation" toward the outside world?
- How do you deal with the outer world?
- Planned/Organized/Settled vs. Flexible/Spontaneous/Open Options

All people use both judging (thinking and feeling) and perceiving (sensing and intuiting) processes to store information, organize thoughts, make decisions, take actions and manage their lives. Yet one of these processes (Judging or Perceiving) tends to take the lead in our relationship with the outside world while the other governs our inner world.

A Judging (J) style approaches the outside world WITH A PLAN and is oriented towards organizing one's surroundings, being prepared, making decisions and reaching closure and completion.

A Perceiving (P) style takes the outside world AS IT COMES and is adopting and adapting, flexible, open-ended and receptive to new opportunities and changing game plans.

Characteristics

Judging Characteristics:

- Plan many of the details in advance before moving into action
- Focus on task-related action; complete meaningful segments before moving on
- Work best and avoid stress when keeping ahead of deadlines
- Naturally use targets, dates and standard routines to manage life

Perceiving Characteristics:

- Comfortable moving into action without a plan; plan on-the-go
- · Like to multi-task, have variety, mix work and play
- Naturally tolerant of time pressure; work best close to the deadlines
- Instinctively avoid commitments which interfere with flexibility, freedom and variety

Reflective Question:

Do you see any of your opposite traits in your parents? Do you see them in your children?

MBTI + Keirsey Temperament

Four Temperaments: SP: Artisan SJ: Guardian NF: Idealist NT: Rational

ISFJ Protector	INFJ Counselor	INTJ Mastermind
ISFP	INFP	INTP
Composer	Healer	Architect
ESFP	ENFP	ENTP
Performer	Champion	Inventor
ESFJ	ENFJ	ENTJ
Provider	Teacher	Field Marshal
	Protector ISFP Composer ESFP Performer ESFJ	ProtectorCounselorISFPINFPComposerHealerESFPENFPPerformerChampionESFJENFJ

- E: Extrovert
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Understanding Your

P.U.R.P.O.S.E.

- P: Passions
- U: Upbringing
- R: Resources
- P: Personality
- **O: Original Abilities**
- S: Spiritual Gifts
- E: Experience of Love



O: Original Abilities

God has given us all different abilities, which we are able to function in whether we are empowered by God or not. List below any abilities that you have had since birth. For example: athletic ability, artistic ability, good verbal communication, intelligence. OMEGA

Prophecy Stewardship Teaching Miracles Giving Leadership Apostleship Wisdom Evangelist Martyrdom Encouragement

S: Spiritual Gifts

KnowledgeHospitFaithMissioHealingInterceCraftsmanshipExhortDiscernmentMusicaHelps/ServiceCreativePastor/ShepherdMercyaTonguesInterpaDeliveranceAdmireCelibacyVolume

Hospitality Missionary Intercession Exhortation/Disciple Maker Music/Worship Leader Creative Communication Mercy/Compassion Interpretation of Tongues Administration Volunteer Poverty Community Builder

See Session 11. Also see Spiritual Gifts Definitions in Appendix F.

E: Experience of Love

Experience of Love - The Love Languages¹⁵

Whether this is hard-wired or learned behavior, it is important to understand how we prefer to experience and express love in our lives.

Three Ways to Discover Your Love Language

- 1. What does your spouse/close friends do or fail to do that hurts you most deeply? The opposite of what hurts you most is probably your love language.
- 2. What have you most often requested of your spouse/close friends? The thing you have most often requested is likely the thing that would make you feel most loved.
- 3. In what way do you regularly express love to your spouse/close friends? Your method of expressing love may be an indication that would also make you feel loved.

Understanding Your

P.U.R.P.O.S.E.

- P: Passions
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The Five Love Languages

- Words of Affirmation
- Quality Time
- Receiving Gifts
- Acts of Service
- Physical Touch

"I can live for two months on a good compliment." – Mark Twain

Reflective Question:

Think of a time when someone spoke words of affirmation to you. What was the circumstance? What was the impact?

"Teach us to give and not to count the cost." – Ignatius of Loyola



Words of Affirmation

Verbal appreciation speaks powerfully to people whose primary Love Language is "Words of Affirmation." Simple statements such as, "You look great in that suit" or "You must be the best baker in the world! I love your oatmeal cookies" are sometimes all a person needs to hear to feel loved. Aside from verbal compliments, another way to communicate through "Words of Affirmation" is to offer encouragement. Here are some examples: reinforcing a difficult decision; calling attention to progress made on a current project; acknowledging a person's unique perspective on an important topic. If a loved one listens for "Words of Affirmation," offering encouragement will help him or her to overcome insecurities and develop greater confidence.

Quality Time

Quality time is more than mere proximity. It's about focusing all your energy on your mate/close friends. A husband watching sports while talking to his wife is NOT quality time. Unless all of your attention is focused on your mate, even an intimate dinner for two can come and go without a minute of quality time being shared.

Quality conversation is very important in a healthy relationship. It involves sharing experiences, thoughts, feelings and desires in a friendly, uninterrupted context. This involves "active listening" to assure that the other person knows you are truly listening. Many people don't expect you to solve their problems. They need a sympathetic listener.

An important aspect of quality conversation is self-revelation. In order for you to really communicate with another person, you must be in tune with your inner emotions. It is only when you understand your emotions and inner feelings that you are able to share quality conversation and quality time with another person.

Quality activities are a very important part of quality time. Many people feel most loved when they spend physical time together, doing activities



that they love to do. Spending time together will bring you closer, and help you build a memory bank that you can draw from in the future.

Receiving Gifts

Some people respond well to visual symbols of love. If you speak this love language, you are more likely to treasure a gift as an expression of love and devotion. People who speak this love language often feel that a lack of gifts represents a lack of love from their mate. Luckily, this love language is one of the easiest to learn.

If you want to become an effective gift-giver, you might have to learn to change your attitude about money. If you are naturally a spender, you will have no trouble buying gifts for that person. However, people who are used to investing and saving their money may have a tough time adjusting to the concept of spending money as an expression of love. These people must understand that you are investing the money not in gifts, but in deepening your relationship with your mate.

The gift of self is an important symbol of love. Sometimes all a person desires is for you to be there for him or her, going through the same trials and experiencing the same things. Your body can become a very powerful physical symbol of love.

These gifts need to come every week or even every day, but they don't have to cost a lot of money. Free, frequent, expensive, or rare, if that person relates to the language of receiving gifts, any visible sign of your love will leave him or her feeling happy and secure in your relationship.

Acts of Service

Acts of service can bring about a great sense of feeling loved for those whom it is a love language. In a marriage relationship or within a family, sometimes simple chores around the house can be an undeniable expression of love. Even simple things like doing the laundry and taking out the trash require

Reflective Question: What does your favorite kind of "quality time" look like?

"The worst gift is a fruitcake. There is only one fruitcake in the entire world, and people keep sending it to each other." – Johnny Carson

The Five Love Languages

- Words of Affirmation
- Quality Time
- Receiving Gifts
- Acts of Service
- Physical Touch

Reflective Question: What types of gifts touch you most deeply?

- "We serve God by serving others."
- Rick Warren

The Five Love Languages

- Words of Affirmation
- Quality Time
- Receiving Gifts
- Acts of Service
- Physical Touch

Reflective Question:

What types of Acts of Service are most meaningful to you?

"Never miss a good chance to shut up." – Will Rogers



some form of planning, time, effort and energy. Just as Jesus demonstrated when He washed the feet of his disciples, doing humble chores can be a very powerful expression of love and devotion to your loved one.

It is very important to understand what acts of service another person most appreciates. Even though couples are helping each other around the house, couples might still fight because they are unknowingly communicating with each other in two different dialects.

Also of importance is to engage in these acts of service out of love and not obligation. Someone who does chores and helps out around the house out of guilt or fear, will inevitably be speaking a language of resentment rather than a language of love. It's important to perform these acts out of the kindness of your heart.

Sometimes demonstrating acts of service can mean stepping out of the stereotypes. Acts of service require both people to humble themselves into doing some chores and services that aren't usually expected from their gender. However, these little sacrifices will mean the world to the other person, and invite a happier relationship.

Physical Touch

Many people feel the most loved when they receive physical contact. For someone who speaks this love language loudly, physical touch can make or break the relationship.

Sexual intercourse makes many mates feel secure and loved in a marriage. However, it is only one dialect of physical touch. It is important to discover how your partner not only physically responds but also psychologically responds to these touches. Sometimes little acts such as touches on the cheek, on the hand, or the shoulder can really make a difference.

All marriages will experience crises. In these cases, physical touch is very important. In a crisis situation, a hug can communicate an immense amount of love for that person. A person whose primary love language is

Reflective Question:

Think of a time when your touch ministered to someone else. What was it like?

"Let us touch the dying, the poor, the lonely and the unwanted according to the graces we have received...." – Mother Teresa

The Five Love Languages

- Words of Affirmation
- Quality Time
- Receiving Gifts
- Acts of Service
- Physical Touch

physical touch would much rather have you hold them and be silent than offer any advice. It is important to remember that this love language is different for everyone. What type of touch makes you feel secure is not necessarily what will make your partner happy. It is important to learn each other's dialects.

P.U.R.P.O.S.E.	7 G's	Description
Passions	Grace	Your greatest passion will flow out of your greatest pain, wound, need, or experience
		of grace.
Upbringing	Growth	How you have been trained by your life!
Resources	Good	Resources entrusted to you.
	Stewardship	
Personality	Guidance	Insights into how you prefer to receive
		and pass on guidance.
Original Abilities	Glorification	Submitting what I have always been able
		to do on my own to God's control for His
		glory.
Spiritual Gifts	Gifts	Operating in your Spiritual Gifts and
		letting God serve others through you!
Experience	Group	Your experience and expression of love
of Love		with others.

Summary

In this session we discussed:

• LFP Level 3: Know Thyself: Nature

Understanding Your P.U.R.P.O.S.E.

P: Personality

MBTI & Keirsey Temperament Sorter

- **O:** Original Abilities
- S: Spiritual Gifts Empowered Servant
- E: Experiences

Experience of Love - Love Languages

Discussion and Reflection

1. How did looking at your personality type help you understand why you do some of the things you do?

2. Out of the strengths listed in your personality type, what seems to be the most accurate description of who you are and how you act?

3. Do you feel like the spiritual gifts that you have contribute to your overall understanding of God's purpose for your life?

4. What are your love languages and how would you describe your experience of love these days?

5. What is your best assessment of the Spiritual Gifts, Personality Temperament and Love Languages of the people in your inner circle?

6. What Scripture verses stood out to you most and why?

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Session 18: Pressing Into God's Purpose	•
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In this session participants will:

Cognitive (Knowing Objectives)

 Grasp the power of believing in God with your whole being, the components of the belief model and the processes of changing incorrect beliefs.

Affective (Feeling Objectives)

• Experience new levels of freedom by understanding and eliminating beliefs contrary to abundant living.

Behavioral (Doing Objectives)

• Re-examine your upbringing to identify belief patterns related to the Seven Values of Abundant Living.

Existential (Lifelong Objectives)

• Experience positive and lasting life change by examining damaging beliefs and behaviors.



Review

In Session 18 we discussed:

• LFP Level 3: Know Thyself: Nature Understanding Your P.U.R.P.O.S.E.

P: Personality

MBTI & Keirsey Temperament Sorter

O: Original Abilities

S: Spiritual Gifts - Empowered Servant

E: Experiences

Experience of Love - Love Languages

Life Focus Process Level 3: Know Thyself

Know Thyself

Commit to Transformation Discipleship and Reality

Clarify God's Mission for Our Lives





Law 14: The Law of Belief

Your behavior is a reflection of what you truly believe (desires, feelings, thoughts and capabilities) will best meet your needs and provide you with a life of abundance. [Romans 10:9-10; James 1:5-8; Mark 11:22-25]

Our beliefs are formed in our being by processing the interaction of our true desires, feelings, thoughts and capabilities. OMEGA

Romans 10:9-10

"That if you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰ For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved."

James 1:5-8

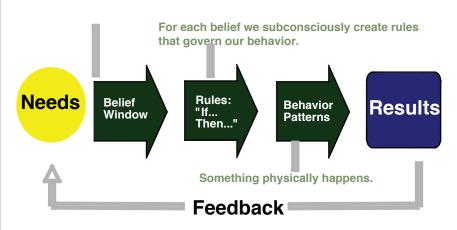
"If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him. ⁶ But when he asks, he must believe and not doubt, because he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. ⁷ That man should not think he will receive anything from the Lord; ⁸ he is a double-minded man, unstable in all he does."

Mark 11:22-25

"Have faith in God," Jesus answered. ²³ "I tell you the truth, if anyone says to this mountain, 'Go, throw yourself into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart but believes that what he says will happen, it will be done for him. ²⁴ Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours. ²⁵ And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive him, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins."

The Belief Model adapted from Hyrum Smith's Reality Model¹⁶

Our beliefs are formed in our being by processing the interaction of our true desires, feelings, thoughts and capabilities.



Reflective Question:

Can you think of an example when you continued to try to change your behavior and not your belief? What was the outcome?



If the results of your behavior meet your needs over the long haul, this feedback tells you that you have a correct belief or harmless opinion on your belief window.

Our beliefs are a combination of what is truly in our Heart, Soul, Mind and Strength (Our Desires, Feelings, Thoughts and Capabilities). For each belief we subconsciously create rules that govern our behavior, and when we act on our belief something happens. If the results of our behavior meet our needs over the long haul, this feedback tells us that we have a correct belief or harmless opinion on our belief window.

Regardless of whether or not our desires and beliefs are correct (in line with God's reality), incorrect (not reflective of reality), or matters of opinion or preference, we assume that all of them are correct and we behave accordingly.

Bad habits and areas where we struggle with self-control need to be examined in light of our real beliefs, and then we need to engage in appropriate spiritually discerned disciplines to help us form healthy habits. OMEGA

Five rules for changing your Belief Window

- 1. Identify the behavior pattern that is not producing the desired results.
- 2. Identify possible beliefs and the root desires, feelings, thoughts and capabilities driving the behavior.
- 3. Predict future behavior based on following those beliefs.
- 4. Identify alternative beliefs that may produce better results.
- 5. Predict future behavior based on the new beliefs.

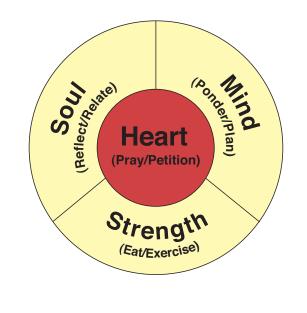
Our Needs

We all have 4 basic needs:

- To live
- To love and be loved
- To experience variety
- To feel important

Being Human and Believing

Understanding the four aspects that make us human beings holds the keys to understanding both our sinful human nature and the God-guided and empowered lives that He has destined each of us to live!



"Sin carries with it a certain moral myopia... it distorts our ability to detect its presence." – John Ortberg

Reflective Question:

What aspect of this text do you relate most closely to?

The Seven Deadly Sins

Pride Envy Wrath Sloth Greed Gluttony Lust



God is trying to train us to believe in Him. This means that we want the life of Christ in and through our entire being:

- To Desire what God desires for us
- To Feel right and wrong, joy and sadness the way God feels
- To Think clearly about truth and plan accordingly
- To Act out of your true capability in Christ

Connection	Impact
Heart to Soul	Desires (Heart) that war against your Soul, inhibiting you from experiencing your true self and feeling (Soul) God's promptings in your life or connecting with the feelings of others in your life.
Soul to Heart	Feelings (Soul) or wounds that disable you from desiring (Heart) to move towards intimacy.
Mind to Heart	Your understanding of truth or your plan for your life (Mind) that influences your desire (Heart) to pursue something or someone.
Strength to Heart and Mind	Capabilities (Strength) that we believe we have make us desire (Heart) to try various activities and if we are successful in them create understandings (Mind) about what is possible for us.

Believing and Sin

The Biblical term for sin means to miss the mark. The bull's eye is God's abundant life. When we choose to desire, feel, think and act in ways that are contrary to God's will for our lives, we miss the mark. Sin begins in our being, so that is where we need to begin to examine our lives.

Romans 7:14-25

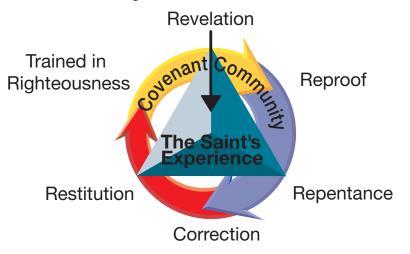
"We know that the law is spiritual; but I am unspiritual, sold as a slave to sin. ¹⁵ I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do. ¹⁶ And if I do what I do not want to do, I agree that the law is good. ¹⁷ As it is, it is no longer I myself who do it,

but it is sin living in me. ¹⁸ I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. ¹⁹ For what I do is not the good I want to do; no, the evil I do not want to do – this I keep on doing. ²⁰ Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it. ²¹ So I find this law at work: When I want to do good, evil is right there with me. ²² For in my inner being I delight in God's law; ²³ but I see another law at work in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within my members. ²⁴ What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? ²⁵ Thanks be to God – through Jesus Christ our Lord!"

John Wesley's mother's definition of sin

Years ago, a friend of mine, Tony Cimmarusti, shared a story with me that includes my favorite definition of sin. The story goes that when John Wesley was a boy, he asked his mother, "Mommy, what is sin?" His mother, who had no formal theological training, replied:

"Whatever weakens your sense of reasoning (Mind), impairs the tenderness of your conscience, obscures your sense of God (Soul), or takes away your relish for spiritual things – (Heart). In short, if anything increases the authority of the flesh over the Spirit (Strength), that to you becomes sin, however good it is in or of itself."



2 Timothy 3:16-17 "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work."

Session 19: The Power of Believing

The Cycle of Renewal and Believing

Believing in the Lord Jesus with all our Heart, Soul, Mind and Strength means that we:

- 1. Embrace the revelation or feedback that God brings into our lives which convicts us of our sin and need for Him.
- 2. Change incorrect or negative beliefs through holistic Repentance: agreeing with God's will (Heart), healing of wounds (Soul), learning His truth (Mind) and calling upon His strength (Strength).
- 3. Embrace God's new correct beliefs (Desires, Feelings, Thoughts and Capabilities) for our lives by making amends or restitution to those we have wounded and engage our new training in righteousness.

The Seven Values of Abundant Living and the corresponding Belief Statements

7 G's	Belief Statement
Guidance	is necessary in order to carry out God's will.
Grace	is God's bridge to us and our bridge to others.
Growth	is a process towards full maturity in Christ.
Glorification	of God is the goal of our lives and our church.
Groups	of Biblically functioning community provide the optimal
	environment for life change.
Gifts	of divine empowerment are given to all believers to grow
	God's church.
Good	is the reasonable response to our gracious God.
Stewardship	



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Summary

In this session we discussed:

- LFP Level 3: Know Thyself: Nurture
- Law 13: The Law of Belief
- The Belief Model

Session 19: The Power of Believing

Discussion and Reflection

1. Law of Belief: What are the implications of this law for your life?

2. Do you understand and agree with the belief model?

3. What stood out to you from Jonathan Wesley's mother's definition of sin?

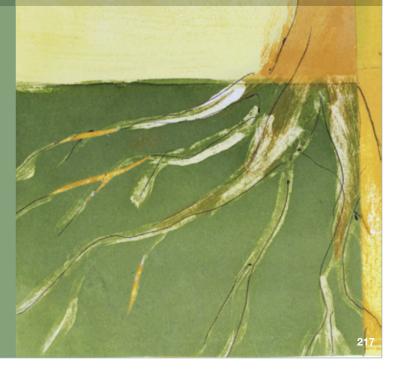
4. How do you go about maintaining an objective perspective on yourself and what is sin to you?

5. Which of the Seven Values of Abundant Living belief statements are your beliefs most in alignment with and why?

6. Which Values do you believe are out of alignment in your life?

7. What Scripture verses stood out to you most and why?

Session 20 The Seven Deadly Sins



In this session participants will:

Cognitive (Knowing Objectives)

• Understand our tendencies toward the Seven Deadly Sins and God's virtuous path towards the abundant life.

Affective (Feeling Objectives)

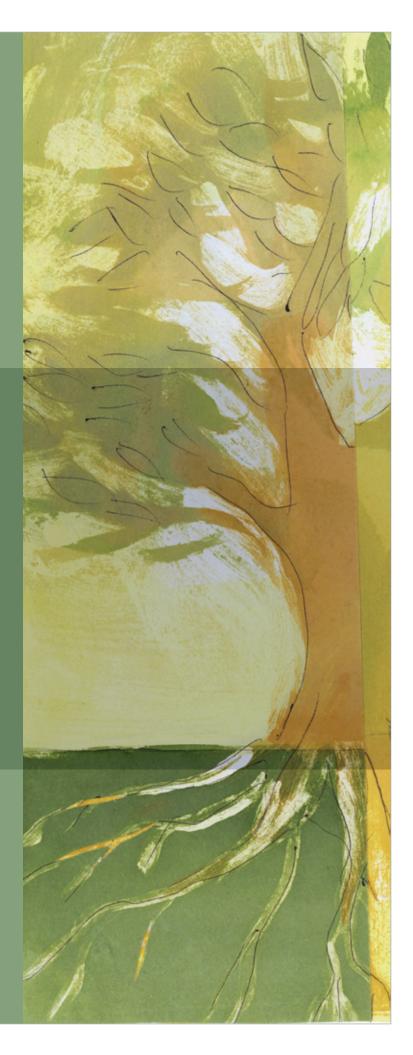
• Experience new levels of freedom by more clearly identifying your sin tendencies, confessing them and moving towards God's virtuous path.

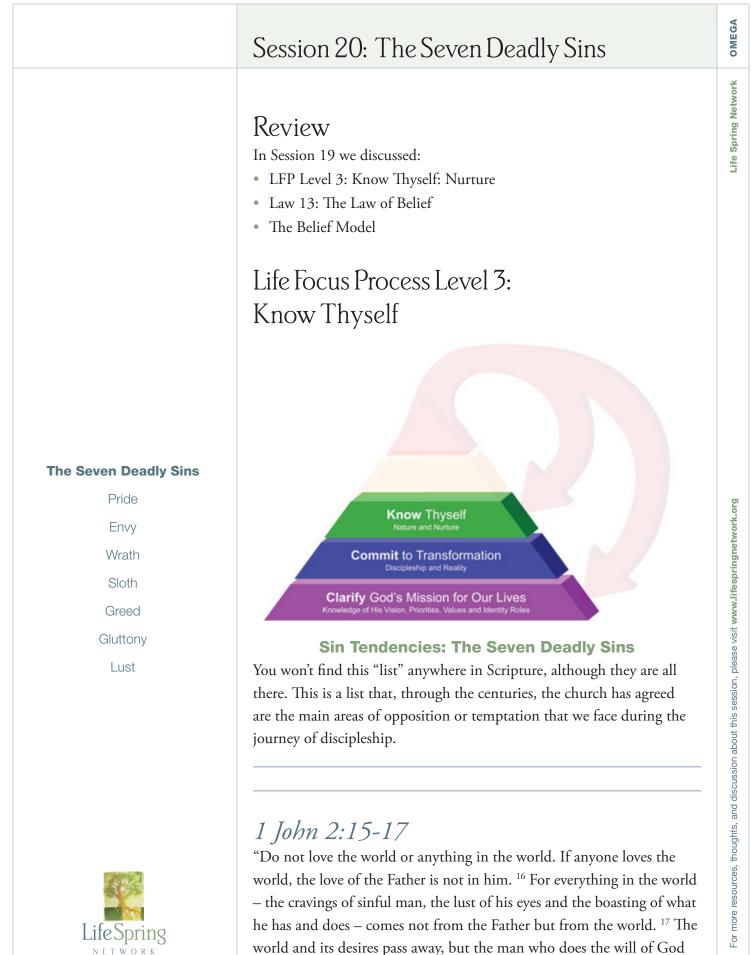
Behavioral (Doing Objectives)

 Assess your life compared to the 7 Deadly Sins, process these sin areas using the Cycle of Renewal, and seek accountability to help you grow towards Godly Virtues.

Existential (Lifelong Objectives)

• Live a more devoted, pure and virtuous life of humility, contentment, meekness, obedience, temperance, stewardship and chastity.





lives forever."

Session 20: The Seven Deadly Sins

The Seven Deadly Sins

Pride Envy Wrath Sloth Greed Gluttony

Reflective Question: In what way is self-loathing a form of pride?

Pride

The Oxford Dictionary defines pride as "a high and overweening opinion of one's qualities, attainments or estate." Pride has traditionally been considered the root of all sin. As such, it is a disordered or exaggerated self-centeredness. It results in isolation from God and fractures the bonds that link us to each other and the community.

The obvious outcome of pride is a dismissal of the need to be in relationship with others. With this distance, hard-heartedness ensues, and compassion and empathy for human suffering is minimized. This holds not only for individuals but also for groups and even nations. Pride undermines community and it ridicules Holy Communion.

Many of our age's cultural values fuel the sin of pride. In a materialistic, competitive society, it is difficult not to struggle against others or compare one's success in relation to other's failures. The more we have, the more entitled or privileged we feel. Success breeds arrogance and intolerance of others less fortunate.

Pride is self-exaltation. In fact, it is a pre-occupation with self. It places self at the very center of life. We are to love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength. Pride puts self in the center and loves self first. Pride loves self more than God. There is little room for God when we are full of ourselves.

Pride even destroys faith. We can't believe two opposite claims at the same time. It is impossible to believe that the one who is happiest is the one who cares for himself first, and at the same time, believe the teaching of Jesus that the one who finds his life is the one who gives it away.

James 4:6

"But he gives us more grace. That is why Scripture says: 'God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.'"

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The Opposite Virtue: Humility The counter-virtue to the sin of pr

The counter-virtue to the sin of pride is humility. The virtue of humility is a hard sell today (perhaps it always has been). The popular view is that humility makes us doormats for others. We do well to remember the teaching of Saint Thomas Aquinas, that humility is "a praiseworthy depreciation of oneself." It has to do with an accurate sense of self and others with a deep reliance on God throughout the seasons of life.

Envy

The dictionary defines envy as "the painful or resentful awareness of an advantage enjoyed by another, joined with a desire to possess the same advantage."

In 1 Corinthians 13:4, the Apostle Paul describes envy as the opposite of love. Galatians 5:21 lists envy as the fruit of the "flesh." The letter of James (3:14-16) associates jealousy and selfish ambition with evil and chaos.

According to Aristotle, envy grows naturally in relationships between equals (or apparent equals). Chaucer describes envy as sorrow at the prosperity of others and joy in their hurt. Saint Thomas Aquinas defines envy as sorrow over another's good. Feeling so insecure, the envious person sees anything good in another as detracting from his or her own personal value. The average blue-collar worker does not envy or compete with the corporate CEO as he would with a co-worker. An envious one watches others with an eagle eye in order to make sure that nobody gets ahead or becomes "more equal" than the rest of the pack.

As a sin among equals, envy has a profoundly negative impact on the members of any group. The Christian community struggles with the demon of envy among its members. It turns up time and again in unexpected situations.

The Seven Deadly Sins

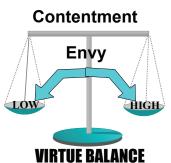
Pride Envy Wrath Sloth Greed Gluttony Lust







Session 20: The Seven Deadly Sins



The Seven Deadly Sins

Pride Envy Wrath Sloth Greed Gluttony

Reflective Question:

What is your method of dealing with any wrath you feel?

The Opposite Virtue: Contentment

Saint Thomas Aquinas reminds us that envy is contrary to love, the source of the soul's spiritual life. Love rejoices in a neighbor's good, but envy grieves over it. The most powerful statement of love is, of course, Saint Paul's teaching in 1 Corinthians 13.

Wrath

As an emotion or passion, anger is a natural reaction caused by someone or something which restricts our freedom to act or carry out our desires. It arises when we face obstacles, frustration of our plans, restraint of our activities, physical harm, insult or psychological injury. Wrath can also result from real or perceived hurt, unmet needs and expectations, or attacks against us...usually by significant people in our lives, like parents and family members, friends and working associates.

Anger is first an emotion. However, it becomes a deadly sin when it becomes inordinate, that is, against reason, and is connected with the desire for revenge, damage or destruction against the perceived cause of our hurt.

In Ephesians 4:26-32, Paul instructs Christians not to let the sun go down on wrath, to rid themselves of bitterness, passion, anger, harsh words, slander and malice. Anger must give way to forgiveness. While this has psychological significance, the grace of reconciliation and union comes from the Lord.

James 1:19-20

"My dear brothers, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, ²⁰ for man's anger does not bring about the righteous life that God desires."

For more resources, thoughts, and discussion about this session, please visit www.lifespringnetwork.org

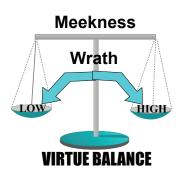
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Session 20: The Seven Deadly Sins

"When angry, count to ten before you speak; when very angry, count to one hundred."

– Thomas Jefferson





Anger unacknowledged leads to destructive behavior. As the letter of James indicates, it does not lead to the building of God's kingdom. Such anger is often expressed in indirect ways. The symptoms are backbiting, gossip, sarcasm, scapegoating, and passive-aggressive behavior. In many cases, sinful conduct that is consciously chosen is rooted in unresolved or displaced anger.

The Opposite Virtue: Meekness

Meekness is related to patience. It has to do with an inner strength or grace which allows one to embrace and endure an injury without self-pity or having to retaliate in kind. It is part of the ability to maintain perspective in the stressful heat of injury.

The virtues that take the wind out of anger are meekness and patience. Add to these humor, the ability to laugh at self and others, and the ironies of life can also help deflate anger. Both "humor" and "humility" spring from the root of humus, which is Latin for "ground."

Jesus' meekness appears in his desire to forgive his murderers in the midst of his crucifixion.

Sloth

Sloth is popularly known today as laziness. The ancient Greek word was *acedia*: lack of caring, apathy, aimless indifference, lack of desire for anything.

The deadly sin of sloth is an apathy of the spirit in the face of the effort required to attain a goal and sustain it. In addition to *acedia*, another aspect of sloth is *tristitia*, sadness or sorrow. Theologian Bernard Haring describes sloth as "a lack of zeal for things spiritual."

Session 20: The Seven Deadly Sins

The Seven Deadly Sins

Pride Envy Wrath Sloth Greed Gluttony Lust

Reflective Question: How could workaholism be tied in with sloth?

"Sloth doesn't necessarily mean we're doing nothing. Sloth is the failure to do what needs to be done when it needs to be done." – John Ortberg Sloth is a dissipation of desire for anything that entails energy or effort. It is like living in a malaise akin to a mild depression. Sloth has to do with choosing to live in a spiritual vacuum. Its symptoms include lack of interest in things of the Spirit, flight from worship of God and lack of care for others. It is having an indifferent will toward doing God's will for your life.

Proverbs 20:4

"A sluggard does not plow in season; so at harvest time he looks but finds nothing."

Deep down, however, slothful people fear God's will and the cost to be paid if they respond from the heart. It is easier in the malaise to put off or reject spiritual support or direction.

According to St. Gregory the Great, some of the "children" of sloth are melancholy, malaise and despair. Far too many people chronically complain about what is tragic or wrong in life while failing to recognize its concomitant beauty, loveliness and joy. These negative patterns of thinking need regular confrontation since they dissipate faith, hope and love.

The Opposite Virtue: Obedience (Pro-actively On Mission with God) This is stewarding your life from God's perspective. It requires us to reflect on our life mission and the various roles we play in life, and allocate our time wisely in each role in order to be growing toward Christlikeness. Since our drift pattern is away from God's mission, focus and discipline are necessary. The Omega course was created to help you get "On Mission" with God.

Session 20: The Seven Deadly Sins



"The Omega Course was created to help you get 'On Mission' with God." – Jason Pankau

The Seven Deadly Sins

Pride Envy Wrath Sloth **Greed** Gluttony Lust

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Greed

Greed is an inordinate love of money or material acquisitions and the dedication to – or even the obsession with – their pursuit.

The implicit belief behind greed is that more is always better. Acquisition is the way to happiness. Financial savvy and success confer status and make a nobody into a somebody. The economy is driven by these needs and beliefs.

The deadliness of greed lies also in the fact that we are desensitized to those who lack the basic amenities of life: food, housing, clothing, etc. It is interesting that as we seek the comforts of upper-class life, we are confronted in our communities with the continuing plight of poverty and the violence and hopelessness that it breeds. We are easily cut off from the neighbors who need us.

Matthew 6:19-21

"Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. ²⁰But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."

Matthew 6:24

"No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money."

Reflective Question: *How does greed betray our trust in God?*



The Seven Deadly Sins

Pride
Envy
Wrath
Sloth
Greed
Gluttony
Lust

If our hearts are set on possessions because of greed, and if that which really motivates us in life is the accumulation of things, then our hearts are diseased. People are often greedy because they believe money and possessions bring security, that money will keep them safe from hunger or homelessness. We may also view greed as a lack of faith, coming out of a fear of not having enough.

Session 20: The Seven Deadly Sins

The Opposite Virtue: Stewardship

We all must come to terms with our radical poverty as creatures before God. The virtue of poverty also calls us to a greater sensitivity to the poor, God's special people. Disciples must give themselves to the social ministries that care for the underclasses of society and the world. This requires not only a Good Samaritan attitude, but a prophetic concern for all who lack the basic amenities of life.

Gluttony

St. Thomas Aquinas defines the deadly sin of gluttony as an inordinate or immoderate appetite in eating and drinking. Medieval writers considered eating and drinking excessive when they were driven by the hedonistic need to satiate the palate or stomach.

Eating disorders such as Anorexia and Bulimia are very common in our time, causing cycles of starving or binging, and swinging between food-related anxiety, depression and guilt and the pursuit of sensory pleasure in food "addiction."

Professionals in this area have concluded that beneath this symptomatic behavior is an inner sense of alienation from the depths of oneself. This inner brokenness is a sad and destructive reality. Indulging and purging are merely symptoms of this inner ambivalence or endless hatred of and flight from self. "Do not join those who drink too much wine or gorge themselves

"Gluttony is an emotional escape, a sign that something is eating us." – Peter DeVries



Proverbs 23:20

on meat"

Temperance is moderation in the enjoyment of food. Sobriety is moderation in the use of intoxicating drink. These virtues are often a hard sell because they challenge our need for immediate gratification. The rewards of virtue never come quickly enough. For those who are obsessed with getting what they want and getting it right now, postponement of gratification is not only unbearable, it is unimaginable.

Wellness experts remind us of what good common sense has always maintained: Good health is fostered by a balanced diet, adequate physical exercise, and a proper blend of work, rest and recreation. It all has to do with introducing some modicum of reason into otherwise undisciplined and self-defeating beliefs and behavior.

Lust

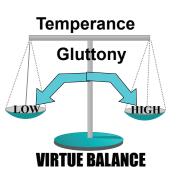
Lust might be considered sexual gluttony. It is the inordinate need to experience sexual or genital gratification, with little concern about the persons or relationships involved.

The deadliness of lust is akin to all the others. We were made in God's image for relationship and self-giving: to God, to spouse, to others. Due to our fallen human nature we suffer from concupiscence (strong sexual desire) which redirects authentic sexual self-giving to another into self-satisfying pleasure at the expense of another.

For more resources, thoughts, and discussion about this session, please visit www.lifespringnetwork.org

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Session 20: The Seven Deadly Sins

The Seven Deadly Sins

Pride Envy Wrath Sloth Greed Gluttony

Reflective Question: *Describe your accountability system for dealing with lust.* As an obsession, lust can also be cruel. It can be linked to most of the forms of sexual assault reported in the daily news: rape, incest, sexual abuse of children and minors, and sexual promiscuity outside the marriage bed.

Genesis 1:27 shows the divine gift of sexuality, the ability for embodied persons to enter into relationship with each other and with God. This intimacy was damaged first in Eden as Adam and Eve felt the need to cover their nudity.

We are seduced and we seduce one another in many ways. We are seduced by beauty, virility, power and control. Without any moral sensitivity, seduction can become a way of life at the expense of true love and intimacy. Herein lies the deadliness of the sin of lust.

Philippians 4:8

"Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable – if anything is excellent or praiseworthy – think about such things."

The Opposite Virtue: Chastity

The virtue of chastity is greatly misunderstood and often just dismissed as naïve. Chastity orders human sexual desire toward a union of two persons. It would be helpful to explore more deeply the implications of chastity for authentic human friendships, not only in relationship to celibacy and religious life.

Chastity correlates with the beatitude, "Blessed are the pure in heart." It sees human sexuality and intimacy as an integral dimension of God's call to love and, of course, we cannot love God or others outside our bodies. Chastity has to do with the physical as well as the spiritual.

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Chastity Lust HIGH VIRTUE BALANCE

"The proof of spiritual

maturity is not how pure you are but awareness of your impurity. That very awareness opens the door to grace." – Phillip Yancey



The	7	Deadly	Sins,	the	7	Virtues	and	the	7	G's
-----	---	--------	-------	-----	---	---------	-----	-----	---	-----

7 Deadly Sins	7 Virtues	7 G's
Pride	Humility	Glorification
Envy	Contentment	Gifts
Wrath	Meekness	Grace
Sloth	Obedience	Guidance
Gluttony	Temperance	Growth
Greed	Stewardship	Good Stewardship
Lust	Chastity	Group

Summary

In this session we discussed:

- LFP Level 3: Know Thyself: Nurture
- The Seven Deadly Sins
 - Pride
 - Envy
 - Wrath
 - Sloth
 - Greed
 - Gluttony
 - Lust

Session 20: The Seven Deadly Sins

Discussion and Reflection

1. Which aspect of each of these are you wrestling with these days?

Pride or Humility

Envy or Contentment

Wrath or Meekness

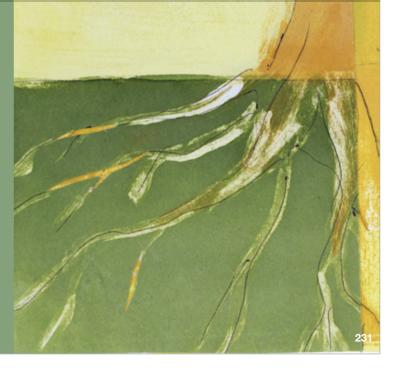
Sloth or Obedience

Greed or Stewardship

Gluttony or Temperance

Lust or Chastity

2. What Scripture verses stood out to you most and why?



In this session participants will:

Cognitive (Knowing Objectives)

 Learn the importance of engaging in spiritually discerned disciplines and walking in your preferred spiritual pathways.

Affective (Feeling Objectives)

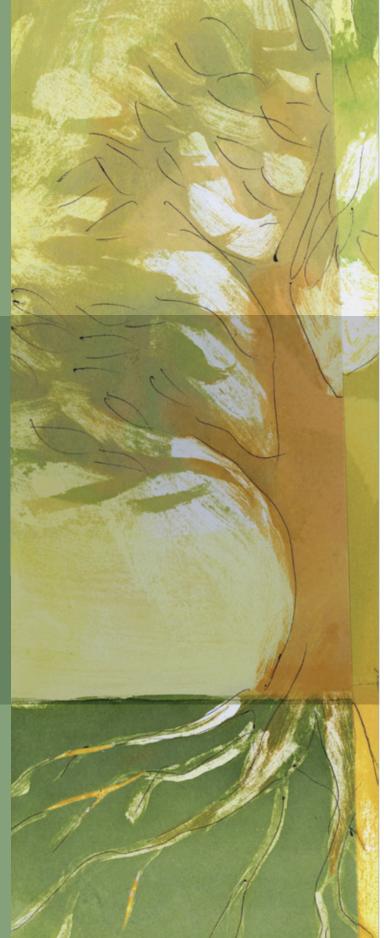
• Feel the power of God and the fruit of the Spirit flowing in and through you as you grow more mature through engaging in spiritually discerned disciplines.

Behavioral (Doing Objectives)

 Reflect on the Disciplines of Abstinence and Engagement and the Spiritual Pathways to better discern God's training plan.

Existential (Lifelong Objectives)

• Engage in practices and disciplines that stretch us and cause us to grow closer to God.





Review

In Session 20 we discussed:

- LFP Level 3: Know Thyself: Nurture
- The Seven Deadly Sins

Pride

Envy

- Wrath Sloth
- Sloth
- Greed

Gluttony

Lust

Life Focus Process Level 4: Chart the Course

Chart the Course Goal Setting and Disciplines

Know Thyself

Commit to Transformation Discipleship and Reality

Clarify God's Mission for Our Lives (nowledge of His Vision, Priorities, Values and Identity Roles)



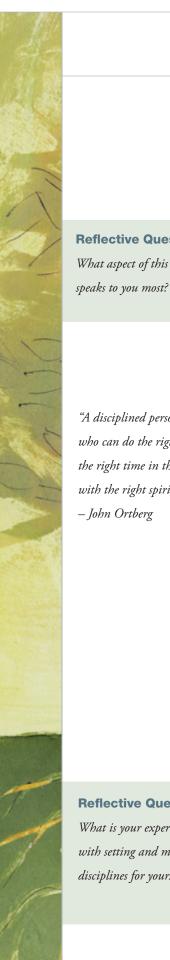


Disciplines

Law 15: The Law of Discipline

Negative habits are overcome by changing incorrect (negative) beliefs (desires, feelings, thoughts and capabilities) and engaging in spiritually discerned disciplines. [Hebrews 12:1-13] OMEGA

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Reflective Question: What aspect of this text

"A disciplined person is someone who can do the right thing at the right time in the right way with the right spirit." – John Ortberg

Reflective Question:

What is your experience with setting and maintaining disciplines for yourself?

Session 21: The Joy of Discipline

Hebrews 12:1-13

"Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. ² Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. ³ Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart. ⁴ In your struggle against sin, you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood. ⁵ And you have forgotten that word of encouragement that addresses you as sons: "My son, do not make light of the Lord's discipline, and do not lose heart when he rebukes you, ⁶ because the Lord disciplines those he loves, and he punishes everyone he accepts as a son." ⁷ Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as sons. For what son is not disciplined by his father? 8 If you are not disciplined (and everyone undergoes discipline), then you are illegitimate children and not true sons. 9 Moreover, we have all had human fathers who disciplined us and we respected them for it. How much more should we submit to the Father of our spirits and live! ¹⁰ Our fathers disciplined us for a little while as they thought best; but God disciplines us for our good, that we may share in his holiness. ¹¹ No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it. ¹² Therefore, strengthen your feeble arms and weak knees. ¹³ Make level paths for your feet, so that the lame may not be disabled, but rather healed."

Disciplines: The Key to Unlocking Our Potential

Again, bad habits and areas where we struggle with self-control need to be examined in light of our real beliefs (See the Belief Model in Session 10), and then we need to engage in appropriate spiritually discerned disciplines to help us form healthy habits. Focusing our efforts through daily, weekly and monthly disciplines is the key to good habit formation and personal growth in our lives. Remember this is a process. Don't engage in a discipline that is going to burn you out because it is unrealistic. Be patient and build on realistic disciplines for yourself.

Disciplines for Being Human:

Role	Discipline		
Heart	Pray (Prayer, Solitude and Silence) & Petition (Intercession and Watching)		
Soul	Reflect (Journaling, Singing and Meditation) & Relate (Confession, Counseling, Retreats)		
Mind	Ponder (Study of Scripture, Journaling) & Plan (Planning your life, Life Coaching)		
Strength	Eat (Surrender, Temperance, Fasting) & Exercise (Exercise, Sabbath)		

Disciplines for Contagious Community:

Role	Discipline					
Inner Circle	Fellowship, Chastity, Celebration, Hospitality and Confession while consistently praying for and					
	building relationships with our spouses and/or great friends.					
Relative/Parent	Fellowship, Sacrifice, Celebration, Hospitality and Submission while consistently praying for and					
	connecting with our parents, relatives and children if appropriate.					
Church	Worship, Fellowship, Confession, Assembling, Celebration, Singing, Hospitality and Communion					
Member	while consistently praying for and relating to our church family and engaging in small group a					
	ocal fellowship gatherings.					
Mentee/Mentor	Guidance, Study, Pilgrimage, Sabbatical and Submission while meeting regularly with mentors,					
	counselors, and covenant community members; and studying through books, tapes, videos and					
	classes which help us to grow, learn how to love and implement what we are learning into our					
	lives. Also to meet regularly with others who seek us out for mentoring.					
Ambassador/	Friendship Evangelism and Hospitality through regular prayer for and connection with friends					
Friend	God brings our way and sharing the gospel with them in word and deed.					

Disciplines for Calling of Servanthood:

Role	Discipline			
Minister of	Secrecy, Service and Sacrifice while serving the "poor in our world" and compassionately loving			
Compassion	them as led by God. This includes but is not limited to visiting the sick and prisoners, and			
	clothing and feeding those in need.			
Steward of	Simplicity, Frugality, Saving, Sacrifice and Giving (including Tithing) while stewarding God's			
Resources	resources.			
Empowered	Teaching, Service, Sacrifice and Fellowship through the regular exercising of spiritual gifts while			
Servant	serving on ministry teams.			
Calling Men-	We grow through Guidance, Study, Pilgrimage, Sabbatical, Submission and meeting regularly with			
tee/Mentor	mentors, counselors, and covenant community members who help us to implement what we are			
	learning in our lives. We learn from studying books, tapes, videos and taking classes. We also meet			
	regularly with others who seek us out for mentoring.			
Professional	Diligent Earner through faithful accomplishment of tasks and Friendship Evangelism through			
	relationship excellence while serving as unto the Lord.			

Disciplines of Abstinence

The spiritual disciplines of abstinence reveal the nature of the battle between the flesh and the spirit. By abstaining from food, social interaction, or sleep, we are "exercising" our spiritual muscles against the lower nature. It is like lifting weights; silly in itself, but useful to prepare us for real physical tests in the future. The things we abstain from in the spiritual disciplines are not evil; it is for the sake of the exercise that we deny ourselves; to prepare us for real temptation – tomorrow, or the next day.

The disciplines of abstinence give us much needed experience and insight into the spiritual battle going on within us, and the lessons learned cannot be taught any other way.

What is it like to say "No" to the lower nature? What tricks will it play? The ways in which desire, habit, distraction, and other factors affect you will not be like anyone else's experience.

You must learn through experience how to live in holiness before God. The disciplines of abstinence are an opportunity to train in safety.

1 Corinthians 6:12 (King James Version)

"All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any."

1 Peter 2:11 (Phillips Version)

"I beg you, as those whom I love, to live in this world as strangers, and "temporary residents", to keep clear of the desires of your lower natures, for they are always at war with your souls."

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1 Peter 1:13

"Therefore, prepare your minds for action; be self-controlled..."

The Disciplines of Abstinence: (see definitions in the Appendix I)

- 1. Solitude
- 2. Silence
- 3. Fasting
- 4. Simplicity
- 5. Chastity
- 6. Secrecy
- 7. Sacrifice
- 8. Watching (Vigil)

Disciplines of Engagement

Author Dallas Willard defines the spiritual disciplines of engagement as the routine Christian activities of prayer, study, and meditation that are especially powerful in combination with the disciplines of abstinence.

Disciplines of abstinence counteract tendencies to sins of commission and disciplines of engagement counteract tendencies to sins of omission. They are often mentioned in combination in Scripture, as seen in James 4:17. Willard declares, "This is the outbreathing and inbreathing of spiritual training."

Galatians 5:16-17 (Phillips Version)

"Here is my advice: Live your whole life in the Spirit and you will not satisfy the desires of your lower nature. For the whole energy of the lower nature is set against the Spirit, while the whole power of the Spirit is contrary to the lower nature. Here is the conflict, and that is why you are not able to do what you want to do..."



Romans 8:12-13 (Phillips Version)

"So then, my brothers, you can see that we owe no duty to our sensual nature, or to live life on the level of instincts. Indeed that way of living leads to certain spiritual death. But if on the other hand you cut the nerve of your instinctive actions by obeying the Spirit, you will live."

2 Timothy 2:21

"If a man cleanses himself from the latter, he will be an instrument for noble purposes, made holy, useful to the Master and prepared to do any good work."

Very few disciplines can be regarded as absolutely indispensable for a healthy life and work, though some are obviously more important than others. Practicing a range of activities that have proven track records across the centuries will help to keep us from erring.

We have grouped the disciplines of engagement into disciplines of: God Engagement God and Community Engagement Life and Wisdom engagement

Disciplines of God Engagement (see definitions in the Appendix I)

- 9. Worship
- 10. Prayer
- 11. Meditation
- 12. Singing
- 13. Surrender
- 14. Study
- 15. Pilgrimage
- 16. Sabbath

	Session 21: The Joy of Discipline	OMEGA
	Disciplines of God and Community Engagement (see definitions in the Appendix I) 17. Teaching	Life Spring Network
	18. Celebration19. Service20. Fellowship	
	21. Confession22. Submission	
	23. Friendship Evangelism24. Assembling25. Hospitality	
	26. Intercessory Prayer	
	Disciplines of Life and Wisdom Engagement (see definitions in the Appendix I)	k.org
	27. Journaling28. Earning20. Spring	ifespringnetwork.org
	29. Saving 30. Giving (Including Tithing) 31. Frugality	e visit www.life
	32. Guidance33. Retreat34. Temperance	session, please
	35. Planning36. Exercise	scussion about this s
		thoughts, and dis
LifeSpring		For more resources, thoughts, and discussion about this session, please visit www.l
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The Holy Spirit and Disciplines

The danger in studying the spiritual disciplines is that we might practice them without the leading of the Holy Spirit but rather with the "spirit of religion" for the purpose of impressing people. On the other hand, I suspect we often thwart the Holy Spirit's leading, because we are ignorant of what is likely to be asked of us.

- How many times has God disturbed our sleep with someone in mind? And we "count sheep" or take a sleeping-pill instead of watching and praying.
- How many sermons have we heard that don't sit well with us? And yet we ignore the Spirit's prompting to study God's word and thus end up with a faulty or incomplete knowledge of God.
- How many earnest prayers go unanswered because we refuse to practice the discipline of fasting?
- How many ugly things do we say to those we love because we are not being obedient to the Spirit's call to spend some time alone?

Matthew 11:25-30

"At that time Jesus said, 'I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. ²⁶Yes, Father, for this was your good pleasure. ²⁷All things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him. ²⁸Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. ²⁹Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

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The yoke of Jesus may indeed be easy, but we keep throwing it off! Our lower natures are in control and running rampant! This is not following Christ's way of living. Small wonder that our growth is stunted, and real holiness is an elusive dream.

If the Spirit led Jesus and every "saint of note" to consistently practice the Spiritual Disciplines so that they could live life to the full, shouldn't we expect the same leading if we are truly His disciples?

Spiritual Disciplines and Spiritual Pathways

The key to wise yoke-bearing and training in righteousness through spiritual disciplines is understanding your preferred spiritual pathways and walking in them.

The combination of Spiritually Discerned Disciplines and Spiritual Pathways creates a synergy and enthusiasm for seeking God and for maintaining motivation.

Spiritual Pathways

What is a Spiritual Pathway?

- A spiritual pathway is the way we most naturally connect with God and grow spiritually.
- We tend to favor one or two main pathways.
- There's usually at least one pathway that is very unnatural for us.
- The goal is to feel great freedom and joy using them. •



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For more resources, thoughts, and discussion about this session, please visit www.lifespringnetwork.org

Seven Spiritual Pathways¹⁷

(Adapted from John Ortberg's course An Ordinary Day with Jesus.)

• Intellectual

Contemplative

- Relational
- Worship

• Serving

Creation

The Seven Spiritual Pathways

Intellectual

- Relational
- Serving
- Worship
- Activist
- Contemplative
 - Creation

Activist

Intellectual

Characteristics

- You draw close to God as you're able to learn more about him.
- The study of Scripture and theology comes naturally.
- You have little patience for emotional approaches to faith.
- You are a thinker.
- When you face problems or spiritual challenges, you go into problem-solving mode.

Examples

- The Apostle Paul
- C. S. Lewis

Strengths

- Read great books that challenge you.
- Expose yourself to lots of teaching.
- Find like-minded people with whom you can learn.

Cautions

- Guard against becoming all mind and no soul which exhibits itself in being all truth and no grace in relationships.
- Don't confuse being smart with being spiritually mature.

Ways to Stretch

- Devote yourself to corporate worship and to private adoration and prayer.
- If your learning doesn't lead to worship, it will get dangerous.
- Engage in self-examination to assess whether or not you are being loving.
- Engage in mentoring with others who will hold you accountable to living what you have learned.

Relational

Characteristics

- Spiritual growth comes most naturally when you're involved in significant relationships.
- Small groups and other community life experiences are key.
- Your life is an open book.
- Being alone can drive you crazy.
- In key times of growth, God will often speak to you through people.

Examples

- The Apostle Peter
- John Wesley

Strengths

- You need a relationally rich life.
- Use your spiritual gift to serve others.
- Pray with others in community.
- Learn in a class with other people or in a small group.
- Use your network of contacts to further God's kingdom.

Cautions

- Guard against superficiality and being all grace and no truth.
- You can grow dependent on others and become a spiritual chameleon.

Ways to Stretch

- Develop a capacity for silence.
- Keep some of your experiences with God secret.
- Study Scripture for yourself.
- Invite close friends and mentors to speak truth to you.



The Seven Spiritual Pathways

Intellectual

Relational

Serving

Worship

Activist

Contemplative

Serving

Characteristics

- God's presence seems most tangible when you're involved in helping others.
- You're often uncomfortable in a setting where you don't have a role.
- You constantly look for acts of service you can engage in.

Examples

- Dorcas in Acts 9:32-43
- Mother Teresa

Strengths

- Get plugged into a community.
- Look for glimpses of God's presence in the people you serve, and in the execution of your tasks.
- Prepare to serve first by praying so your service is genuinely spiritual service.

Cautions

- Be careful not to resent other people who don't serve as much as you do.
- Remember that God loves you not because you are so faithful in serving him, but because you are his child.
- Don't confuse serving with trying to earn God's love.

Ways to Stretch

- Balance your service with small group and community life.
- Learn to receive love even when you're not being productive.
- Practice expressing love through words as well as actions.

The Seven Spiritual Pathways

Intellectual

Relational

Serving

Worship

Activist

Contemplative



Worship

Characteristics

- You have a deep love of corporate praise and a natural inclination toward celebration.
- In difficult periods of life, worship is one of the most healing activities you engage in.
- In worship, your heart opens up and you come alive and enthusiastically participate.

Examples

- King David
- Darlene Zschech

Strengths

- Experience great worship on a regular basis.
- Use worship tapes or CDs and make your car a private sanctuary.
- Learn about other worship traditions, and incorporate what you learn into your personal worship time.

Cautions

- Be careful not to judge those who aren't as expressive in worship.
- Guard against an experience-based spirituality that always has you looking for the next worship "high."

Ways to Stretch

- Engage in the disciplines of study and solitude.
- Serve God in concrete ways as an extension of your worship.
- Remain committed to your community of faith.



The Seven Spiritual Pathways

Intellectual

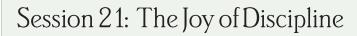
Relational

Serving

Worship

Activist

Contemplative



Activist

Characteristics

- You have a single-minded zeal and a very strong sense of vision.
- You have a passion to build the church; a passion to work for justice.
- Challenges don't discourage you.
- You do everything you can to bring out the potential God has placed in other people.
- You love a high-paced, problem-filled, complex, strenuous way of life.

Examples

- Nehemiah
- William and Catherine Booth

Strengths

- Create a sense of challenge in your life.
- Find a team of people you can invest in and work with to accomplish big goals.

Cautions

- You may run over people or use them.
- Guard against going too long without pausing to reflect on what you're doing.
- You can end up not even knowing your own motives, spiritual condition, or emotional state.

Ways to Stretch

- Spend time in solitude and silence.
- Cultivate a reflective discipline like journaling.
- Develop close spiritual friendships with one or two other people who can help to nurture your soul.

The Seven Spiritual Pathways

Intellectual

Relational

Serving

Worship

Activist

Contemplative

Creation



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Contemplative

Characteristics

- You love uninterrupted time alone.
- Reflection comes naturally to you.
- You have a large capacity for prayer.
- If you get busy or spend a lot of time with people, you feel drained and yearn for times of solitude.

Examples

- Mary, Martha's sister
- Henri Nouwen

Strengths

- You need regular, protected, intense times of solitude and stillness.
- Faithfully follow the intuitions and leadings that come in your times alone with God.
- Act on what you hear from God in the silence.

Cautions

- You have a tendency to avoid the demands of the real world.
- Be careful not to retreat to your inner world when friends, family or society disappoint you.
- Resist the temptation to consider your times of private prayer and solitude as less important than the more public acts of ministry performed by others.

Ways to Stretch

- Choose a regular place of active service.
- Stay relationally connected, even when those relationships become difficult or challenging.
- Connect with those who have an activist pathway.



Intellectual

Relational

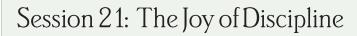
Serving

Worship

Activist

Contemplative





Creation

Characteristics

- You respond deeply to God through your experience of nature.
- Being outdoors replenishes you.
- You're highly aware of your physical senses, and often art, symbols or ritual will help you grow.
- You tend to be creative.

Examples

- Jesus
- George Washington Carver

Strengths

- Spend time outdoors.
- Find a location for getaways.
- Make beauty a part of your spiritual life.

Cautions

- You may be tempted to use beauty or nature to escape.
- You will find that people are sometimes disappointing.
- Guard against the temptation to avoid church.

Ways to Stretch

- Stay involved in a worshipping community.
- Be willing to help out in less-than-beautiful settings.
- Take Scripture with you into nature and meditate on God's Word.
- Actively create beautiful spaces where people are drawn to worship.

The Seven Spiritual Pathways

Intellectual

Relational

Serving

Worship

Activist

Contemplative

OMEGA Session 21: The Joy of Discipline Life Spring Network Making the Most of Your Spiritual Pathway • Give yourself permission to be who you are in God. • Be willing to engage in activities that move you out of your comfort zone. • Be careful not to envy someone else's pathway. • Beware of the temptation to judge someone else because of his or her pathway. • Explore and develop the other pathways. Summary • Each of us has one or two preferred spiritual pathways. • It's good to explore all the spiritual pathways. For more resources, thoughts, and discussion about this session, please visit www.lifespringnetwork.org The Seven Values of Abundant Living and the Seven Spiritual Pathways 7 G's **Spiritual Pathways** Guidance Intellectual Group Relational Gifts Serving Glorification Worship Growth Activist Grace Contemplative Good Stewardship Creation Summary In this session we discussed:

- LFP Level 4: Charting the Course
- Law 15: The Law of Discipline
- Disciplines •
- Spiritual Pathways



Discussion and Reflection

1. The Law of Discipline: What are the implications of this law for your life?

2. What has your experience with discipline been like in your life?

3. In looking at the disciplines of Abstinence and Engagement, what stood out to you the most and why? Did those disciplines correspond to a role in your life that God is highlighting for you? If so, explain which disciplines you think would stimulate growth in your life.

4. Which of the Seven Spiritual Pathways do you relate to the most? How has obedience to and engagement in your spiritual pathways been a blessing to your life and helped you to connect to God?

5. What Scripture verses stood out to you most and why?

In this session participants will:

Cognitive (Knowing Objectives)

• Learn the role of accountability, process and perseverance, and disciplines in setting and realizing God discerned goals.

Affective (Feeling Objectives)

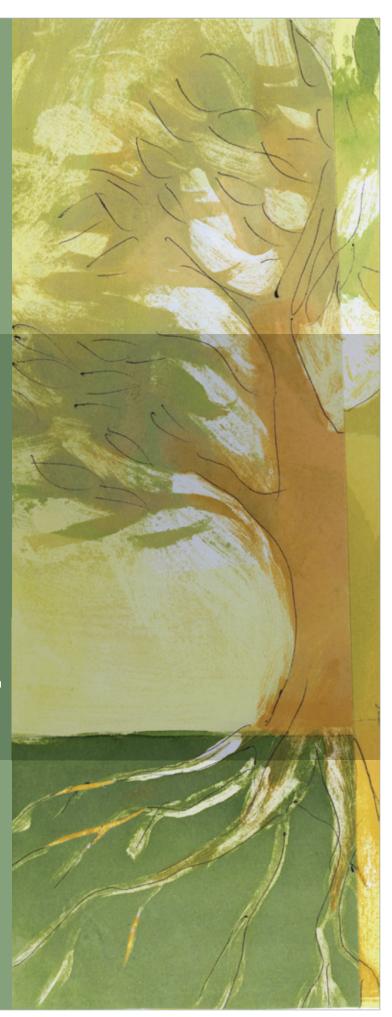
 Be motivated and not overwhelmed by having a workable process by which to gain momentum towards God's goals for your life.

Behavioral (Doing Objectives)

 Create detailed goals for three roles that need the most attention in your life and mega goals for all the other areas in order to see the big picture of your life growth plan.

Existential (Lifelong Objectives)

• Continue to grow as a disciple of Christ through the appropriate use of goal setting, planning and mentoring.



Review

In Session 21 we discussed:

- LFP Level 4: Charting the Course
- Law 15: The Law of Discipline
- Disciplines
- Spiritual Pathways

Life Focus Process Level 4: Chart the Course

Chart the Course Goal Setting and Disciplines

Know Thyself Nature and Nurture

Commit to Transformation Discipleship and Reality

Clarify God's Mission for Our Lives (nowledge of His Vision, Priorities, Values and Identity Roles

Charting the Course

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If you've ever done any time management work, you know that the best thing to do is to build it on a base of a long-range vision. Then those goals are broken down further into shorter and shorter increments.

Many times people overwhelm themselves, then guilt themselves, and then just stop rather than being strategic, focused, and building the proper encouragement and accountability systems.

Growth toward Christlikeness requires Accountability, Process, and



Philippians 3:12-17

Perseverance. [Philippians 3:12-17]

Law 16: The Law of Growth

"Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. ¹³ Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, ¹⁴ I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus. ¹⁵ All of us who are mature should take such a view of things. And if on some point you think differently, that too God will make clear to you. ¹⁶ Only let us live up to what we have already attained. ¹⁷ Join with others in following my example, brothers, and take note of those who live according to the pattern we gave you."

Goal Setting and Accountability

Any serious endeavor stays on track through the appropriate accountability system of checks and balances.

Reflective Question:

Where do you see our society's desire for less accountability with age?

Share your vision, mission, goals and disciplines with trusted mentors or coaches, and get together with them regularly to review how you are progressing. Our society reflects a desire to have less accountability with age. However, God's perspective is that we would become more accountable, more connected with community as we grow.

Remember:

No mentor or coach can see everything. This is why it is important to have a number of mentors and coaches that can speak to the different issues of life.

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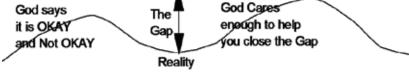


"Plans fail for lack of counsel, but with many advisers they succeed."

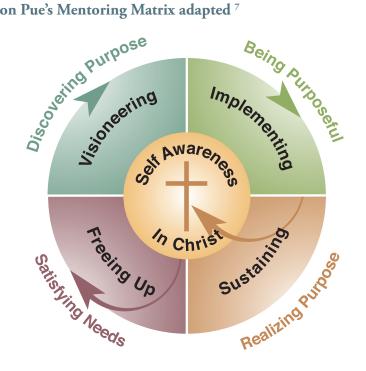
The Role of Mentoring in Charting the Course



Marriage / Friendships / Parenting / Talents / Finances / Work God's Vision for our lives - Perfection



Carson Pue's Mentoring Matrix adapted 7



For more resources, thoughts, and discussion about this session, please visit www.lifespringnetwork.org

Mentoring and the Life Focus Process

"Christian Mentoring is an intentional relational process where someone is guided, empowered, and encouraged by God through another to: embrace God's Presence, steward their life from God's Perspective and realize their potential through God's Power!"

Jason Pankau

Reflective Question:

In what way does writing down goals most help us?



Goal Setting and Process

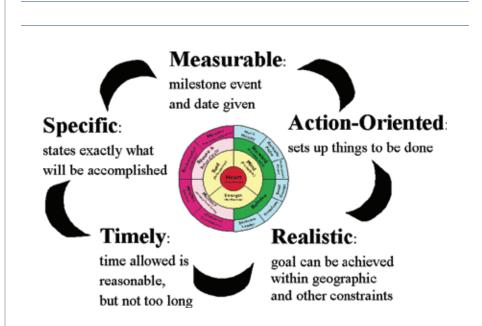
Even if you have an aversion to setting goals, everyone needs focus. Many people like to take a "problem-solving" approach instead. Either way, engage the process. Find a strategy that works for you and stick with it! As the saying goes, "Aim at nothing and you will hit it every time."

Habakkuk 2:2-3

"Then the LORD replied: "Write down the revelation and make it plain on tablets so that a herald may run with it. ³ For the revelation awaits an appointed time; it speaks of the end and will not prove false. Though it linger, wait for it; it will certainly come and will not delay."

S.M.A.R.T. Goals¹⁸

However you decide to approach goal setting, there are some key principles to remember that will help you gain and sustain real momentum.



Using Planning Pages

Use the planning pages in the Personal Development Guide to record your goals and remind you of your focus.

Share your planning pages with a mentor, and use them as the basis for your discussion about how you are doing and the kinds of adjustments you might want to make.

Honoring the Seasons of Your Life

There will be emphases on different roles depending on your stage and place in life. It is important to attend to each stage as it comes. If you decide not to do what you need to be doing during that particular season, it will only prolong the process.

Reflective Question:

What has your experience been with using planning pages?



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Reflective Question: What do you most need to attend to in the season of life you find yourself in now?

"Our Adversary majors in three things: noise, hurry and crowds. If he can keep us engaged in "muchness" and "manyness," he will rest satisfied." – Richard Foster

Ecclesiastes 3:1-14

"There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven: ² a time to be born and a time to die, a time to plant and a time to uproot, ³ a time to kill and a time to heal, a time to tear down and a time to build, ⁴ a time to weep and a time to laugh, a time to mourn and a time to dance, ⁵ a time to scatter stones and a time to gather them, a time to embrace and a time to refrain, ⁶ a time to search and a time to give up, a time to keep and a time to throw away, ⁷ a time to tear and a time to mend, a time to be silent and a time to speak, ⁸ a time to love and a time to hate, a time for war and a time for peace. ⁹ What does the worker gain from his toil? ¹⁰ I have seen the burden God has laid on men. ¹¹ He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the hearts of men; yet they cannot fathom what God has done from beginning to end. ¹² I know that there is nothing better for men than to be happy and do good while they live. ¹³ That everyone may eat and drink, and find satisfaction in all his toil – this is the gift of God. ¹⁴ I know that everything God does will endure forever; nothing can be added to it and nothing taken from it. God does it, so men will revere him."

Goal Setting and Perseverance

Sometimes doing the will of God will not "feel" fun, any more than running a race feels fun while doing it, but when we complete the course a sense of accomplishment and growth at the end makes it all worthwhile. We have been trained by the world's way of thinking that God's ways are not fun and will not lead us to life. However, this perception is based on the world's standards, not God's.

1 Timothy 4:15-16

"Be diligent in these matters; give yourself wholly to them, so that everyone may see your progress. ¹⁶ Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers."

Hebrews 10:36-39

"You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised. ³⁷ For in just a very little while, "He who is coming will come and will not delay. ³⁸ But my righteous one will live by faith. And if he shrinks back, I will not be pleased with him." ³⁹ But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who believe and are saved."

"The life you live trains you for the life you lead." – Jason Pankau



Romans 5:1-5

"Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, ² through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. ³ Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; ⁴ perseverance, character; and character, hope. ⁵ And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us."

Summary

In this session we discussed:

- LFP Level 4: Charting the Course
- Law 16: The Law of Growth
- Goal Setting

Goal Setting and Accountability Goal Setting and Process

- Goal Setting and Trocess
- Goal Setting and Perseverance

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Discussion and Reflection

1. In going through the goal-setting process, were you reminded of any dreams or projects that you have been thinking about doing but never got around to?

2. The Law of Growth: What are the implications of this law for your life?

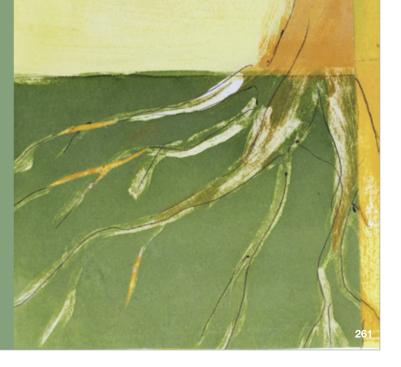
3. Are the goals that you set S.M.A.R.T. or do you find goal setting and achievement difficult?

4. Who in your life could serve as your mentor and accountability partner?

5. What are the three areas in your life that you are going to choose to think through thoroughly using your role-planning worksheets? Why did you choose these areas to focus on?

6. What Scripture verses stood out to you most and why?

Session 23 Aligning with God



In this session participants will:

Cognitive (Knowing Objectives)

• Grasp the necessity and process of alignment in the life of discipleship.

Affective (Feeling Objectives)

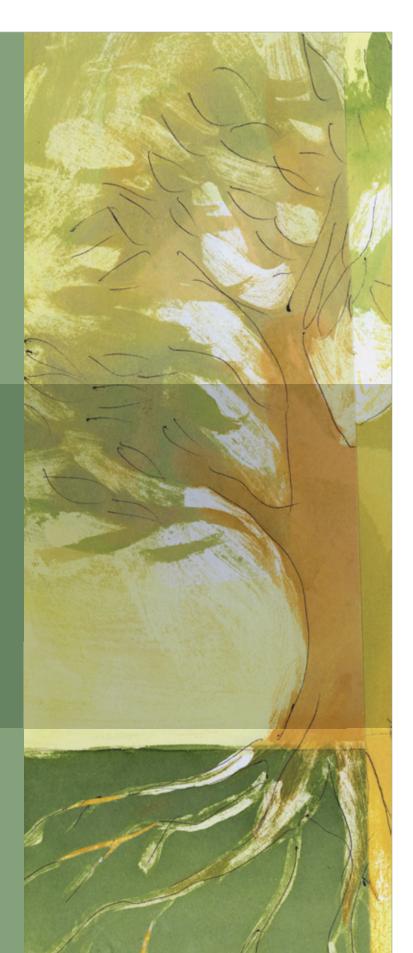
 Feel confident and competent to make in-course adjustments along the journey of discipleship.

Behavioral (Doing Objectives)

• Use the weekly compass and a daytimer to plan your life for the next month.

Existential (Lifelong Objectives)

 Regularly plan, evaluate and adjust your life in order to stay in alignment with God's Mission for your life.





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Session 23: Aligning with God

Review

In Session 22 we discussed:

- LFP Level 4: Charting the Course
- Law 16: The Law of Growth
- Goal Setting Goal Setting and Accountability Goal Setting and Process
 - Goal Setting and Perseverance

Life Focus Process Level 5: Stay the Course



Law 17: The Law of Alignment

Regular evaluation, planning and realignment with God's mission leverages time through increased focus. [Jeremiah 29:13] OMEGA

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Session 23: Aligning with God

Jeremiah 29:13

"You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart."

Proverbs 8:32-36

"Now then, my sons, listen to me; blessed are those who keep my ways. ³³ Listen to my instruction and be wise; do not ignore it. ³⁴ Blessed is the man who listens to me, watching daily at my doors, waiting at my doorway. ³⁵ For whoever finds me finds life and receives favor from the LORD. ³⁶ But whoever fails to find me harms himself; all who hate me love death."

Planning and Tracking

Our tendency is to drift away from God's will for our lives. Therefore, we must create a plan for engaging our Spiritually-discerned disciplines and have regular times of planning and recalibration with Him. No one naturally drifts toward righteousness.

We need the daily discipline of planning when we align and submit ourselves to the Guidance and Power of God.

Reflective Question:

What is your favorite way to spend time connecting with the Father?

"Big Picture" Planning and Tracking

We recommend a rhythm to your planning.

- Annual and Quarterly "Big Picture" Planning
- Weekly and Daily "Detail" Planning

Annual Retreat: Annual retreats to seek God's wisdom for any major readjustments in your life, holistically thinking through your long-range plans, establishing your annual mega-goals and planning annual events for the year with the key relationships in your life.

Quarterly Renewal - Establishing your three-month seasonal goals and discerning the three roles you are going to focus on growing over the following three months. This should be done with the help of your mentors by reviewing your "Big Picture" roles and goals, evaluating your progress and synthesizing any new revelations, projects, tasks and appointments into your personal growth plan.

Luke 14:28-33

"Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Will he not first sit down and estimate the cost to see if he has enough money to complete it? ²⁹ For if he lays the foundation and is not able to finish it, everyone who sees it will ridicule him, ³⁰ saying, This fellow began to build and was not able to finish. ³¹ Or suppose a king is about to go to war against another king. Will he not first sit down and consider whether he is able with ten thousand men to oppose the one coming against him with twenty thousand? ³² If he is not able, he will send a delegation while the other is still a long way off and will ask for terms of peace. ³³ In the same way, any of you who does not give up everything he has cannot be my disciple.

The Monthly View

Every planning tool should have a monthly view and for most people this view is the most important one. Use this view to help you do your "Big Picture" planning. This is the first calendar that you should reference when scheduling appointments, because it will have everything written on it. Also, there are sections associated with the monthly calendar that will aid you in setting monthly goals and establishing disciplines. After entries have been made on the monthly calendar, enter them on your weekly or daily planning pages.



Remember:

the right things.

Efficiency is doing things

right. Effectiveness is doing

Session 23: Aligning with God

Projects

When we are engaged in projects which will take a certain amount of time, a project worksheet will help us break down the project into individual tasks and prioritize their accomplishment.

Using planning pages Role Planning Worksheets Annual Planning Worksheets Long Range Planning Worksheets Project Planning Worksheets

Reflective Question:

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How would you rate yourself in the area of project management?

"Detail" planning and tracking

Weekly and Daily "Detail" Planning

Weekly: Review the previous week, evaluate your progress and synthesize any new revelations, projects, tasks, disciplines and appointments into your calendar and personal growth plan.

Daily: Daily overview, prioritization and alignment.

Weekly Adjustments

Review the previous week, evaluate your progress and synthesize any new revelations, projects, tasks, disciplines and appointments into your calendar and personal growth plan.

Use your Planning Worksheets and Weekly Compass!

Think through the disciplines, appointments, and tasks that will help you to function well in each area of your life and move towards your God-discerned goals. Put your weekly compass next to your day timer and plan your week or month.

Weekly "Detail" Planning and Tracking

Suggestions for Weekly Planning

- 1. Find a place that is relatively free from distractions.
- 2. Prayerfully review your Mission, Goals and Disciplines.
- 3. Think back through the week and evaluate what happened, record any major God-sightings and create plans to respond to any revelations from God.
- 4. Create a task and appointment list, prioritize them and begin to decide when you will accomplish them.
- 5. Anticipate obstacles.
- 6. Ask God for His Guidance and Power to live in Him that week!

Utilizing Planners

Planners can help us stay on track and focus our lives. Planners help us to plan our work, work our plan and track how we are truly investing our time. They can also be used as a good mirror into our beliefs by tracking our behavior.



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Session 23: Aligning with God

Jesus and Daily Planning

Jesus daily realigned His life with the will of the Father.

We read in Scripture that it was His habit to draw away daily in the morning to pray alone.

It was during this time with the Father that he aligned His life with the will of the Father and received His guidance and empowerment for the day.

We also know that He rested weekly on the Sabbath and recalibrated His entire being with the Father.

Daily Planning At the beginning of each day during your planning time pull out your day timer, prioritize your tasks and appointments, and plan the flow of your day. Become familiar with a notation system that works for you and use it to help you plan and track your various activities and projects.

Daily "Detail" planning and tracking

Suggestions for Daily Planning

- 1. Find a place that is relatively free from distractions.
- 2. Prayerfully review your plan for the day and any new adjustments you need to make.
- 3. Review your daily task and appointment list.
- 4. Anticipate obstacles.
- 5. Prioritize your daily activities.
- 6. Ask God for His Guidance and Power to live in Him that day!

Revelation and Adjustments



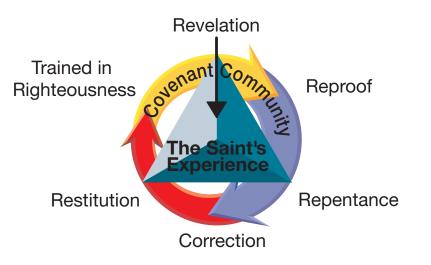
God desires to speak into our lives and reveal truth to us about who we really are and how we are really following His path towards abundant living. We can become aware of several sin areas in our lives, but making adjustments and following through on the cycle of renewal is necessary if we are going to mature in our relationship with God.

Hebrews 3:12-15

"See to it, brothers, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God. ¹³ But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called Today, so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness. ¹⁴ We have come to share in Christ if we hold firmly till the end the confidence we had at first. ¹⁵ As has just been said: 'Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as you did in the rebellion.'"



The Cycle of Renewal



2 Timothy 3:16-17 "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work."

Love flows out of a well-aligned and growing heart and life.

Spiritual disciplines, evaluation and adjustments along the way can help us to connect with God and grow in having well-aligned hearts that express His love.

Summary

In this session we discussed:

- LFP Level 5: Stay the Course
- Law 17: The Law of Alignment
- Planning and Tracking
- Revelation and Adjustments

Weekly Planning Compass

Use this planning tool to think through each area of your life and how you feel led by God to be investing your time in each area this week. Once you have written down the key disciplines, tasks, or meetings that pertain to each role of your life, then use your calendar to plan when you will engage this week in the disciplines, tasks, or meetings you have chosen. For more detailed definitions of each Spiritual Discipline the Omega Course, see Appendix I.

Connecting to God in Your Being

Role	Key Disciplines	Tasks/Appointments
Heart		
Soul		
Mind		
Strength		

Contagious Community

Role	Key Disciplines	Tasks/Appointments
Inner Circle		
Relative/Parent		
Church Member		
Mentee/Mentor		
Ambassador/Friend		

Calling

Role	Key Disciplines	Tasks/Appointments
Minister of Compassion		
Steward of Resources		
Empowered Servant		
Calling Mentee/Mentor		
Professional ()		

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Session 23: Aligning with God

Discussion and Reflection

1. The Law of Alignment: What are the implications of this law for your life?

2. How do you plan to engage in your own version of Daily Alignment?

3. What is your current method of evaluating your life and listening for God's revelation or guidance for your life?

4. Do you have a day timer and can you see how it can be used as a tool to help you align yourself, progress towards your goals, and better accomplish your mission in life?

6. What Scripture verses stood out to you most and why?

In this session participants will:

Cognitive (Knowing Objectives)

 Understand the necessity and process of training in the life of a reproductive disciple of Christ.

Affective (Feeling Objectives)

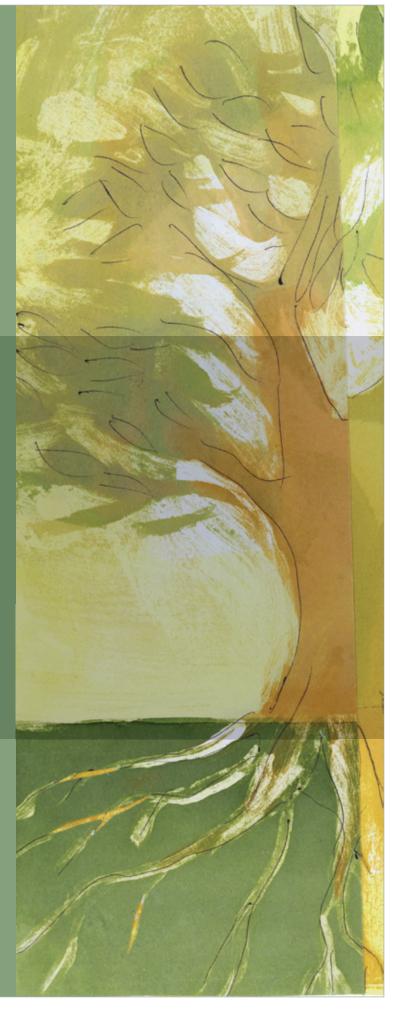
• Be hopeful and encouraged to embrace God's training in righteousness and live the Abundant Life in Christ.

Behavioral (Doing Objectives)

 Commit to training towards Christlikeness, pursuing personal growth plans and evaluating the flow of the fruit of the Spirit in and through our lives.

Existential (Lifelong Objectives)

 Be faithful and diligent God-fearing and God seeking people who embrace His training and are equipped to Realize Life's Potential as reproductive disciple-makers for His Kingdom.





Review

In Session 23 we discussed:

- LFP Level 5: Stay the Course
- Law 17: The Law of Alignment
- Planning and Tracking
- Revelation and Adjustments

Life Focus Process Level 5: Stay the Course







Law 18: The Law of Training

The life you live trains you for the life you are going to lead! [1 Corinthians 9:24-27; 1 Timothy 4:7-8; Luke 14:26-29, 34-35] OMEGA

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1 Corinthians 9:24-27

²⁴Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize. ²⁵ Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last; but we do it to get a crown that will last forever. ²⁶ Therefore I do not run like a man running aimlessly; I do not fight like a man beating the air. ²⁷ No, I beat my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize.

1 Timothy 4:7-8

"Have nothing to do with godless myths and old wives' tales; rather, train yourself to be godly. ⁸ For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come."

Luke 14:26-29

"If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters – yes, even his own life – he cannot be my disciple. ²⁷ And anyone who does not carry his cross and follow me cannot be my disciple. ²⁸ Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Will he not first sit down and estimate the cost to see if he has enough money to complete it? ²⁹ For if he lays the foundation and is not able to finish it, everyone who sees it will ridicule him,"

Luke 14:34-35

"Salt is good, but if it loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? ³⁵ It is fit neither for the soil nor for the manure pile; it is thrown out. 'He who has ears to hear, let him hear.'"

To help others develop in Christlikeness, you need to understand the component parts that make up their lives.

This course has been designed as a journey to help you reflect upon the various areas of your life and what God's perspective is concerning those areas, so that you can intentionally move towards becoming a person who lives out God's Mission.

Component Categories and Characteristics of Christian Formation that we have studied:

- Life Focus Process
- God's Mission
- God's Vision
- God's Priorities
- God's Values
- God's Identity Roles
- Spiritual Gifts
- Godly Attitudes
- Godly Armor
- Godly P.U.R.P.O.S.E.
- Godly Virtues
- Understanding of 18 Natural Laws of Life Stewardship
- God and Man Through History
- Cycles of Grace and Grief
- The Road of Life and Cycle of Renewal
- Contagious Christian Community
- The Reality Picture of Spiritual Warfare
- Blessings and Curses
- 24 Character Strengths
- The Seven Deadly Sins and God's Virtues
- The Belief Model
- Disciplines and Spiritual Pathways



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Training for Abundant Living: Developing Christlikeness

In the Christian context developing Christlikeness comes about through a process of seeking God's guidance and training, then applying one's life to God's training in the power of the Holy Spirit.

God's discipline and training mold, shape and empower you to desire, feel, think and act in accordance with His will.

This is only possible when done in community with others empowered by the Holy Spirit.

When the Fruit of the Spirit is manifest in one's life, Christlikeness is being formed enabling the Spirit to bear fruit.

Fruit of the Spirit that flow through Godly Character Galatians 5:19-21

Love – The Fullness of Life Joy – On Mission With God Peace – Grace-filled Shalom of God Patience – Grace for others Kindness – Hospitable to others Goodness – God's Power flowing through us Faithfulness – Good Stewardship Gentleness – Correcting others delicately Self-control – Divine power at work which brings Glory to God.

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The Journey Ahead

Much of the Omega course is about learning how to do things that don't generally come naturally. In many ways, it's just easier to float through life and drift toward adopting the ways of the world. Ultimately, this will lead to death, which is anything less than God's best for us. Our lives affect everyone we meet. The reality is, there is a lot at stake.

The disciplines, strategies and principles that we have discussed throughout Omega have been designed to help you work proactively with God to more effectively align yourself with His Vision, Priorities, Values and Identity Roles for your life.

Since this doesn't come naturally, it will require focus, accountability, support from the community of faith and empowerment by the Holy Spirit to keep you moving along the narrow path on the Road of Life. As you continue to grow and be trained by Him, you will experience more and more of the Abundant Life that He has for you, and you will become a more powerful conduit of His Love to a world that is desperately in need. Remember, He has "blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ" (Ephesians 1:3). He has already given you everything you will need for the journey ahead!

Summary

In this session we discussed:

- LFP Level 5: Stay the Course
- Law 18: The Law of Training
- Developing Christlikeness



Discussion and Reflection

1. The Law of Training: What are the implications of this law for your life?

2. What does your current commitment to pursuing Christlikeness in your life look like?

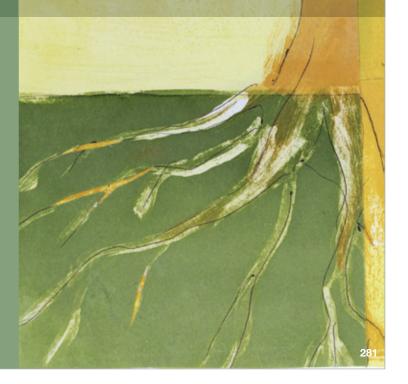
3. As we looked back through Omega what stood out to you and why?

4. What fruit of the Spirit do you see manifest in and through your life these days?

5. What fruit of the Spirit don't you see manifest in and through your life these days?

6. What Scripture verses stood out to you most and why?

Appendices



Appendix A: The 18 Natural Laws of Life Stewardship[™]

Law 1 – The Law of Stewardship –Life is a gift of time that we are responsible to steward with the decisions that we make until we die. [1 Peter 4:1-5; Psalm 90:12]

Law 2 – The Law of Mission – Every life (being and doing) is guided by a governing mission, which is a combination of vision, priorities, values and identity roles we have learned from our life experience and chosen as a path to abundant life. [Deuteronomy 30:19-20]

Law 3 – The Law of Abundant Life – When your life (being and doing) reflects God's governing mission for your life (vision, priorities, values and identity roles), you experience the abundant life. [Psalm 1:1-6; John 10:10]

Law 4 – The Law of Perspective – Seeing life from God's perspective is essential if we are going to experience God's abundant life! (Having a Biblical Worldview) If you can't see it you can't do it! [Luke 3:21-22; Mark 1:35; Galatians 4:6-7; John 15:1-5]

Law 5 – The Law of Identity – Abundant living comes from being who God created you to be and engaging your identity in Christ. [Genesis 1:27; Psalm 139:13-16; Ephesians 2:8-10]

Law 6 – The Law of Community – We need the love, fellowship, wisdom and accountability of Christ-centered covenant relationships to keep us on track and growing. [Galatians 6:1-10]

Law 7 – The Law of Calling – God has called and equipped each person to function interdependently with others in a concerted effort to express His love to the world. [Ephesians 2:8-10; Ephesians 4:1-6; 2 Thessalonians 1:11-12]

Law 8 – The Law of Servanthood – In serving one another with our lives, we become free and express significant transforming love. [John 13:1-17]

Law 9 – The Law of Transformation – We must choose to submit ourselves to God's mission and His transforming power, if we are going to experience more abundance in life. [Isaiah 64:8, Romans 12: 1-3; 2 Corinthians 3:16-18]

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Appendix A: The 18 Natural Laws of Life Stewardship[™]

Law 10 – The Law of Attitude – Choosing Godly Attitudes brings focus to the journey of transformation and prepares us to experience and express love abundantly in any situation. [Matthew 5:1-2; Philippians 2:1-11]

Law 11 – The Law of Reality – Our sinful nature combined with the influence of evil in the world co-conspire to lead us away from God, but God has provided all we need to stand against these forces and realize His abundant life. [The book of Ephesians; Romans 7, 8]

Law 12 – The Law of Consequences - Actions taken and words spoken have profound consequences on our journey of transformation, either blessing or cursing our lives and the lives of those we touch.

[Deuteronomy 30:11-20, Galatians 6:7-10]

Law 13 - The Law of potential - Having an objective awareness of our obedience to God's mission, character and purpose is essential to realizing life's potential. [Romans 12:1-3; Philippians 4:13]

Law 14 – The Law of Belief – Your behavior is a reflection of what you truly believe (desires, feelings, thoughts and capabilities) will best meet your needs and provide you with a life of abundance.

[Romans 10:9-10; James 1:5-7; Mark 11:22-25]

Law 15 – The Law of Discipline – Negative habits are overcome by changing incorrect (negative) beliefs (desires, feelings, thoughts and capabilities) and engaging in spiritually discerned disciplines.

[Hebrews 12:1-13]

Law 16 – The Law of Growth – Growth toward Christlikeness requires Accountability, Process and Perseverance. [Philippians 3:12-17]

Law 17 – The Law of Alignment – Regular evaluation, planning and realignment with God's mission leverages time through increased focus. [Jeremiah 29:13]

Law 18 – The Law of Training – The life you live trains you for the life you are going to lead! [Galatians 6] OMEGA

Appendix B: The Seven Values of Abundant Living

Guidance is necessary in order to carry out God's will.

We depend upon God's leadership (or guidance) in our lives which is available through the Holy Spirit. We all need regular devotional and prayer times to connect with God in solitude. We seek the will of God through prayer, Bible study, circumstances, and the Church. We acknowledge the reality of spiritual warfare, where the battle is raging in the heavenly realms, and commit ourselves to praying so that God might use us to battle against the forces of darkness (Ephesians 6:12). Pray for yourself, your family, your community, people in authority over you, the sick, the poor, the crippled, the needy, etc. We show our need for God and our desire to grow our relationship with Him and others when we pray. It is through prayer and the guidance of the Holy Spirit that God uses our lives to influence others. We respect the spiritual authority and guidance of those God has placed in positions of authority and servanthood in our lives to help lead, guide and shepherd us along our journey of faith, and commit to seeking out their guidance as well. This includes the principle of maximum connection to God.

Grace is God's bridge to us and our bridge to others.

We are saved by Grace through Faith in Jesus Christ - and this not from our own works – so that no one can boast (Ephesians 2:8). Christ's followers understand and have individually received Christ's saving, sustaining and enabling grace. Our focus is on the resurrected Christ and His Spirit, who saves us, is at work changing us and empowers us to do God's will. Therefore, we are gracious and patient with people in our relational worlds who, like us, are on a journey of faith. As God's ambassadors, we reach out and share His grace with people He brings into our relational worlds and help them grow in faith. We believe in relational evangelism and believe that the Gospel is best shared person-to-person through the power of community. This includes the principle of authenticity and being real.

Growth is a process toward full maturity in Christ.

We recognize faith as a process and are committed to challenging ourselves and others to grow to maturity. Maturity means taking hold of all that is Christ (Philippians 3:12) and through His enabling Spirit, doing works of service which move us toward the goal of life. This goal is being the fullness of Christ in us (Ephesians 4:12), pleasing Him in every respect (1 Thessalonians 4:1). We need to surround ourselves with mentors and partners who will love, challenge, and provide guidance to us as we grow in faith. We desire to be diligent students of Scripture, and allow God's truth to be impressed

on the very fabric of our lives. We look at our lives holistically and allow the mental, emotional, physical, spiritual and social dimensions of our lives to be transformed by the Holy Spirit. As we mature in our faith and God entrusts people to our care, we will strive to be good mentors to the people in our lives who look to us for guidance and discipleship. Leaders will strive to be submitted to those they lead and also will have regular discipleship and accountability times with their mentors. This includes the principle of discipleship chains.

Glorification of God is the goal of our lives and our church.

We lead lives of worship and bring glory to God in all we do when we humbly follow the guidance He provides. Excellence brings glory to God, so we submit ourselves to God's guidance so that He can work through us. We will strive to increasingly submit our lives to God and live lives of humble submission to His will. We will participate in regular times of worship where we can submit ourselves to God and refocus our lives on His Lordship. God calls us to be a royal priesthood of believers who go to Him for guidance and empowerment, and we will be held accountable for the way we live our lives both personally and corporately (1 Peter 2:9; Hebrews 4:13; Romans 14:12). As God's saints, we will strive to live lives of submission to God and identify our lives with Him. This includes the principle of being before doing.

Groups of Biblically functioning community provide the optimal environment for life change.

We are committed to living our lives together in groups where both the vertical (you and God) and horizontal (you and the world) components of the Christian life will be lived out and growth is optimized. Christ calls us together as a people belonging to God (1 Peter 2:9), a new creation (2 Corinthians 5:17), established in true righteousness and holiness (Ephesians 4:24), who in community are to show forth His praises (1 Peter 2:9). God desires that we learn from one another's diversity; therefore our groups should be willing to be diverse in every way: ethnic, racial, cultural, sociological, economic, etc. Differences and diversities easily divide, but we are called to follow the Master in our microcosm of God's kingdom. We are commanded to live lives of humility, patience, love and forbearance (Ephesians 4:2) as Spirit-people through whom His fruit will be seen in community. The fruit of the Spirit cannot be seen apart from community (Galatians 5:22). We all need to become a member of a small group and a local fellowship (local expression of the family of God, local church). By entering into covenant relationship with others, we are placing ourselves in the optimal environment to experience life change. We will strive to live out the "one anothers" of Scripture together as God's family. This includes the principle of unity in diversity.

Appendix B: The Seven Values of Abundant Living

Gifts of divine empowerment are given to all believers to grow God's Church.

We are committed to discovering our spiritual gifts and passions and using them to serve and build up the Kingdom of God. Like our Master, we don't come to be served but to serve, and to give our lives for one another (Mark 10:45) in love (John 15:12) and unity. We do this so that the watching world will believe that such a One as Jesus in reality did come (John 17:23). God calls us to use the gifts, talents and resources that He has given us to help build up His Church. We are all called to serve in general and in specific ways. Our general calling of servanthood includes getting involved in service projects with our community and striving to model Jesus Christ's life of servanthood. Our specific calling of servanthood is where God has uniquely gifted us to build up His Church. We are all created for a purpose, and God has given every believer at least one spiritual gift so that we all might contribute to the building of His Church.

Good Stewardship is the reasonable response to our gracious God.

We understand our relationship to God and this world as that of stewards or managers, and strive to be good stewards of our whole lives as God leads us. Christ-followers realize that they have been bought with the price of Christ's blood, and that everything they are and have belongs to Him. In light of this, we live as managers or stewards of all that God entrusts to us. We view our time, talents, and treasures as precious resources which need to be faithfully managed according to God's will, principles and priorities. In response to Christ's abundant giving, we increasingly submit our resources to His Lordship and display a spirit of generosity and cheerfulness. We are willing to share the resources God has entrusted to us as He leads (Luke 16). This includes following God's priorities for living and managing our lives in balanced and God-honoring ways. Where our treasure is, there will our hearts be also (Matthew 6:21). As God leads, we will accept and strive to serve faithfully in ordained leadership positions within the body of Christ. People are God's most precious resource and the pinnacle of His creation, and therefore, we will take the overseeing responsibilities in our lives seriously. We will strive to lead and guide others with gentleness and respect.

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7 G's	The Lord's Prayer	Acts 2	Promises	Attitudes
Glorification	"Our Father in heaven, hallowed be thy name,	 ⁴⁶ "Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, ⁴⁷ praising God" 	God promises to glorify himself through reverent worshippers who serve His purposes!	I have decided to live as a worshipper and glorify God in every aspect of my life.
Group	Your kingdom come,	^{42b} "and to the fellowship"	God promises His love, peace and presence to members of His Family.	I have decided to live in covenant community as a member of God's family and welcome in all who desire to join.
Growth	Your will be done	^{42a} "They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching"	God promises to train and transform earnest disciples of God's righteous life.	I have decided that I will live as a disciple, striving to become more like Jesus in every area of my life.
Gifts	on earth as it is in heaven.	⁴³ "Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles."	God promises His empowerment and protection to those who surrender to Him and serve through His Strength.	I have decided to live every day as an empowered servant allowing God to express His love through me.
Good Stewardship	Give us today our daily bread.	 ⁴⁴ "All believers were together and had everything in common. ⁴⁵ Selling their possessions and goods they gave to anyone as he had need." 	God promises His provision to those who depend on Him and steward life wisely.	I have decided that life is a gift of time, talents and treasure that I will gratefully steward as God leads.
Grace	Forgive us our debts as we also have forgiven our debtors.	^{42c} " to the breaking of bread" ^{47b} " and enjoying the favor of all of the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved."	God promises His forgiveness to those who repent and live as His ambassadors in the world.	I have decided that I will receive God's grace for my life and live as His ambassador of reconciliation in the world.
Guidance	And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from the evil one."	^{42d} and to prayer."	God Promises His Guidance to those who submit themselves to His Lordship and follow Him.	I have decided that I need God's guidance in every aspect of my life and will live as His follower!

Appendix C: 7 G's Summary Chart

7 G's	Full Armor of God	The Curses of Disobedience	Character Strengths	
Glorification	The Helmet of Salvation	Pride - Jeremiah 17:5-6	Spirituality/Purpose, Humility/Modesty, Appreciation of Beauty and Excellence	
Group	And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints.Disrespect of Parents - Deuteronomy 27:16 Sexual Immorality - Deuteronomy 27:20-23		Love of People, Citizenship, Kindness, Social Intelligence	
Growth	The Breastplate of Righteousness	Hypocrisy and Disobedience to the Word - Deuteronomy 27:26	Love of Learning, Persistence, Self-Regulation, Integrity	
Gifts	The Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.	Religion - Galatians 3:10	Creativity, Bravery, Vitality	
Good Stewardship	The Shield of Faith	Dishonesty/Greed; Unrighteous Stewardship - Haggai 1:5-6; Malachi 3:8-10	Prudence, Fairness, Gratitude	
Grace	Feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the Gospel of Peace	Harming the helpless and weak - Deuteronomy 27:18-19 Hatred/Murder - Deuteronomy 27:24-25	Forgiveness/Mercy, Hope/Optimism, Humor	
Guidance	The Belt of Truth	Idolatry - Deuteronomy 27:15	Perspective/Wisdom, Curiosity, Leadership, Open Mindedness	

Appendix C: 7 G's Summary Chart

7 G's	P.U.R.P.O.S.E.	Belief Statement	7 Deadly Sins	7 Virtues	Spiritual Pathways
Glorification	Original Abilities	Glorification of God is the goal of our lives and our church.	Pride	Humility	Worship
Group	Experience of Love	Group provides the optimal environment for life change.	Lust	Chastity	Relational
Growth	Upbringing	Growth is a process towards full matu- rity in Christ.	Gluttony	Temperance	Activist
Gifts	Spiritual Gifts	Gifts of divine empowerment are given to all believers to grow God's church.	Envy	Contentment	Serving
Good Stewardship	Resources	Good Stewardship is the reasonable response to our gracious God.	Greed	Poverty as Steward	Creation
Grace	Passions	Grace is God's bridge to us and our bridge to others.	Wrath	Meekness	Contemplative
Guidance	Personality	Guidance is necessary in order to carry out God's will.	Sloth	Obedience	Intellectual

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Appendix D: Qualifications for Elders in the Church

The qualifications for office of elder are outlined in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1:6-9. An elder should aspire to the office (not be pushed into it). They include:

- 1. Being above reproach
- 2. Devoted spouse (if married)
- 3. Temperate
- 4. Self-controlled
- 5. Respectable
- 6. Hospitable
- 7. Loves what is good
- 8. Not given to drunkenness
- 9. Gentle, not violent
- 10. Not quarrelsome
- 11. Free from the love of money and dishonest gain
- 12. Good managers of their kids (if parents) and resources
- 13. Not recent converts but tested and faithful
- 14. Have a good reputation with outsiders
- 15. Not self-willed but Spirit-led, holy and disciplined
- 16. Not quick tempered
- 17. Able to teach and defend sound doctrine
- 18. Impartial (gives objective counsel)
- 19. Devoted to prayer
- 20. Holding to the word (Scripture is their authority)

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We believe that the Holy Spirit officially commissions every believer into a ministry of caring for one another. After all, none of the following commands are restricted to a particular title (such as elders only) or a particular gender (such as men only).

- 1. "... Be at peace with each other" Mark 9:50
- 2. "... Wash one another's feet" John 13:14
- 3. "... Love one another..." John 13:34
- 4. "... Love one another..." John 13:34
- 5. "... Love one another..." John 13:35
- 6. "... Love each other..." John 15:12
- 7. "... Love each other..." John 15:17
- 8. "Be devoted to one another in brotherly love..." Romans 12:10
- 9. "... Honor one another above yourselves" Romans 12:10
- 10. "Love in harmony with one another..." Romans 12:16
- 11. "... Love one another..." Romans 13:18
- 12. "... Stop passing judgment on one another" Romans 14:13
- 13. "Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you..." Romans 15:7
- 14. "... Instruct one another" Romans 15:14
- 15. "Greet one another with a holy kiss" 1 Corinthians 16:20
- 16. "... When you come together to eat, wait for each other" 1 Corinthians 11:33
- 17. "... Have equal concern for each other" 1 Corinthians 12:25
- 18. "Greet one another with a holy kiss" 2 Corinthians 13:12
- 19. "Greet one another with a holy kiss" 1 Corinthians 16:20
- 20. "... Serve one another in love" Galatians 5:13
- "If you keep on biting and devouring each other...you will be destroyed by each other." Galatians 5:15
- 22. "Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other" Galatians 5:26
- 23. "Carry each other's burdens..." Galatians 6:2
- 24. "Be patient, bearing with one another in love" Ephesians 4:2
- 25. "Be kind and compassionate to one another..." Ephesians 4:32
- 26. "... Forgiving each other..." Ephesians 4:32
- 27. "Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs" Ephesians 5:19
- 28. "Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ" Ephesians 5:21
- 29. "... In humility consider others better than yourselves" Philippians 2:3
- 30. "Do not lie to each other..." Colossians 3:9
- 31. "Bear with each other..." Colossians 3:13

Appendix E: The "One-Anothers" of Scripture

- 32. "...Admonish one another" Colossians 3:16
- 33. "...Forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another" Colossians 3:13
- 34. "Teach ... [one another]" Colossians 3:16
- 35. "...Make your love increase and overflow for each other" 1 Thessalonians 4:9
- 36. "...Love each other" 1 Thessalonians 4:9
- 37. "...Encourage each other..." 1 Thessalonians 4:18
- 38. "...Encourage one another..." 1 Thessalonians 5:11
- 39. "...Build each other up..." 1 Thessalonians 5:11
- 40. "Encourage one another daily..." Hebrews 10:25
- 41. "...Spur one another on toward love and good deeds" Hebrews 10:24
- 42. "...Encourage one another" Hebrews 10:25
- 43. "...Do not slander one another" James 4:11
- 44. "Don't grumble against each other..." James 5:9
- 45. "Confess your sins to each other..." James 5:16
- 46. "...Pray for each other, that you might be healed" James 5:16
- 47. "...Love one another deeply, from the heart" 1 Peter 1:22
- 48. "...Live in harmony with one another..." 1 Peter 3:8
- 49. "...Love each other deeply..." 1 Peter 4:8
- 50. "Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling" 1 Peter 4:9
- 51. "Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others..." 1 Peter 4:10
 - 52. "...Clothe yourselves with humility toward one another..." 1 Peter 5:5
- 53. "Greet one another with a kiss of love" 1 Peter 5:14
- 54. "... Love one another" 1 John 3:11
- 55. "... Love one another..." 1 John 3:23
- 56. "... Love one another..." 1 John 4:7
- 57. "... Love one another..." 1 John 4:11
- 58. "... Love one another..." 1 John 4:12
- 59. "... Love one another" 2 John 5

Twenty-one of the fifty-nine, or fully one third, call for Christians to love! Scores of additional passages command all believers to love their neighbors as themselves, build up the Church, be involved in mutual edification, be like-minded, be of one accord, and similarly "...do good...to those who belong to the family of believers" (Galatians 6:10). Add to these commands the many other Scripture verses that describe the role of caring. One writer, for instance, marvels at how Christ's forgiveness gives rise to true "...fellowship with one another..." (1 John 1:7). Another thanks God for the maturity whereby "...the love every one of you has for each other is increasing" (2 Thessalonians 1:3).

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For more resources, thoughts, and discussion about this session, please visit www.lifespringnetwork.org

The Spiritual Gifts Definitions

We have intentionally included the widest variety of gifts and their definitions that we could support through Scripture and observable experience, so that everyone in the Body of Christ might be able to sense where they fit into God's Kingdom-building efforts.

Spiritual Gifts and Original Abilities

Some of these "gifts" are obviously Spiritual Gifts. Others are debatable. However, it is not particularly important whether a certain ability is a Spiritual Gift, a blessing from God, a God-given talent, an inherited trait, a natural human ability, or something learned. The thing that is important is that we discover what gifts are more pronounced in us and learn how to use them to serve God. God is just as pleased when we use a learned ability to serve Him as He is when we use a Spiritual Gift to serve Him. The key is to discover our capabilities (Spiritual Gifts and Original Abilities) and learn to use them to love, worship, and serve God and others.

These definitions are influenced and adapted from Dr. Dan Reiland's *"Spiritual Gifts"* course, David Posthuma's *"Grace Gifts"* inventory, Ken Ellis's Spiritual Gifts Inventory, *Your Spiritual Gifts Can Help Your Church Grow* by C. Peter Wagner, *Jesus on Leadership: Becoming a Servant Leader* by C. Gene Wilkes and Tom Wells' Spiritual Gifts course. The seven categories they are organized into are unique to the Empowered Servanthood Seminar.

Get-It-Done Gifts:

Get-It-Done gifts are divine empowerments that serve people by enabling the church to get ministry done.

1. Administration

The gift of Administration is the distinctive ability to coordinate and organize people and projects.

The Purpose: To ensure that dreams, plans, goals, and objectives are realized in a smooth and efficient manner for the glory of God.

It is the special ability to effectively manage the affairs of the church and its respective ministries. It is the special ability God gives to some to steer the Body toward the accomplishment of God-given goals and directives by planning, organizing, and supervising others. It is the divine enablement to understand what makes an organization function and the special ability to plan and execute procedures that accomplish the goals of the ministry. *æ*

People with the gift of Administration are highly effective at implementing and sustaining the mission and goals of the organization. Administrators tend to focus more on achieving goals and objectives than nurturing people. Like Timothy in Philippians 2:19-22, Administrators can be self-sacrificing for the welfare of the organization's mission. They tend to believe that the ministry and all its people will be served best when the ministry organization functions optimally. Acts 6:1-7 tells us how the early Church selected their first ministry administrators; their requirements included being "full of the Spirit and wisdom." 1 Timothy 3:4 and 12 tells us that one of the requirements for leadership consideration within the Church is that the potential leaders must "administer their family well." The passage continues: "...for how can they administer the affairs of the church if they cannot manage their own family?"

People with this gift:

- develop strategies or plans to reach identified goals.
- assist ministries to become more effective and efficient.
- create order out of organizational chaos.
- manage or coordinate a variety of responsibilities to accomplish a task.
- organize people, tasks and/or events.

Evidence:

- A. You enjoy planning and goal-setting.
- B. Organization comes easily to you.
- C. You can manage several tasks at once.
- D. You possess a servant's heart.
- E. You will stick to a project until it is complete.
- F. You tend to be thorough and objective.

Cautions:

- a. You may tend to put projects before people.
- b. You may become overly concerned with details.
- c. You may have a tendency toward perfectionism.
- d. You may have a tendency to focus more on rules and procedures than on accomplishing the mission.

The gift of Administration can be shaped by the personality of the person who possesses the gift. As a result, people with the gift of Administration tend to fall into the following preferred roles. Not all may apply to your life and ministry:

• Content Administrators are excellent detail people who prefer to focus on the business of the church or ministry project. They will naturally see all the details that must be addressed. This strength can be a wonderful asset to a ministry's stability and health when properly balanced, so that the Content Administrator does not impede further ministry development because of "all the details." Content Administrators may have difficulty delegating details to others out of a concern that "balls will be dropped" or from an inner belief that "no one can do the job as well as I can"... and often their experience has proved to them that these perspectives are correct. • Organizational Administrators excel at organizational systems and structures. They will approach a complex project or organization and immediately begin to systematize it in an attempt to maximize efficiency and ministry impact. Organizational Administrators will devise master strategic plans that make logical sense. However, in the implementation of the strategic plan it is important that the Organizational Administrator not make the people impacted feel like pawns of the process. Organizational Administrators tend to delegate effectively the many details of the complex strategic plan.

• Human Resource Administrators excel at people dynamics. They naturally think of both individual needs and how the individual can add value to an overall team dynamic. While Human Resource Administrators value organizational structures and objectives, they also value people. People tend to trust and rely upon the Human Resource Administrator to seek their welfare as well as the welfare of the organization.

Scriptures: 1 Corinthians 12:28, Nehemiah 3, Luke 14:28-30

2. Helps/Service

The gift of Helps/Service is the divine enablement to accomplish practical and necessary tasks which free up, support, and meet the needs of others.

The Purpose: To enable other Christians to be more effective and fruitful in ministry, through the accomplishment of practical and necessary work.

It is the special ability God gives certain people to work gladly behind the scenes or to invest their talents in the life of and ministry to other members of the Body, enabling them to increase their effectiveness in order that God's work is accomplished. The gift of Helps is sometimes also called the gift of Service. The common attribute of this Spiritual Gift is the passion to humbly serve and support others within the assembly of Christ Followers. The person possessing the gift

of Service will display a natural servant heart and will seek the welfare of others, even to the point of self-sacrifice. It is not uncommon for people with the gift of Helps to feel like they don't have any gifts at all. But this is far from true. When the gift of Helps is appropriately applied within the Body of Christ, the helper is acting very much like Jesus who said of his own ministry, "I did not come to be served, but to serve" (Matthew 20:28). Paul speaks honorably about Phoebe who had the gift of Helps... "I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a servant of the church in Cenchrea. I ask you to receive her in the Lord in a way worthy of the saints and give her any help she may need from you, for she has been a great help to many people, including me" (Romans 16:1-2). In 1 Corinthians 12:27-31, the Apostle Paul also lists "helping others" among the "greater gifts." In 1 Peter 4:11, Peter instructs: "if any one serves, he should do it in the strength that God provides...."

Depending upon your personality type, you will likely prefer one of the following ways to apply your gift of Helps.

• I prefer to help individuals. You may feel a particular passion to use your gift of Helps within the lives of individuals. You prefer one-on-one interaction. You like to see tangible results from the direct impact God is making through you in the lives of others.

• I prefer to help ministry teams. You may feel that you best fit within a positive team environment. You prefer not to be alone, and value the support and camaraderie that can only be experienced in partnership with others for the sake of the Kingdom. In addition, you may also view yourself as a "resource" person who desires to ensure that everyone on the ministry team has what is needed to be successful.

People with this gift:

- serve behind the scenes whenever needed to support the gifts and ministries of others (with and without having to be asked).
- see the tangible and practical things to be done and enjoy doing them.
- sense God's purpose and pleasure in meeting everyday responsibilities.
- attach spiritual value to practical service.
- enjoy knowing that they are freeing up others to do what God has called them to do.
- would rather do a job than find someone else to do it.

Evidence:

- A. You enjoy helping others accomplish specific tasks.
- B. You don't need much public recognition.
- C. Other people give you opportunities to help them.
- D. You possess a servant spirit.
- E. You tend to be available and reliable.

Cautions:

- a. Thinking it's a lowly gift.
- b. Missing the big picture.
- c. An inability to say no.

Scriptures: Acts 9:36, Luke 10:38,

1 Corinthians 12:28-31, Romans 16:1-2, Mark 15:40-41, Galatians 6:2, Romans 12:6-8, 1 Peter 4:11, Philippians 2:19-23, Luke 22:24-27, John 13:14

3. Giving

The gift of Giving is the distinctive ability to discern God's guidance as to how He desires to resource His Kingdom, and cheerfully and generously contribute personal resources to God's work.

The Purpose: To discover and provide for the resource needs of the Body of Christ in such a way that God is glorified, not the giver.

It is the gift that enables a believer to recognize God's blessings and to respond to those blessings by generously, sacrificially and cheerfully giving of

one's resources (time, talent and treasure) without thought of return.

It is the divine enablement to contribute money and resources to the work of the Lord with cheerfulness and liberality. People with this gift do not ask, "How much money do I need to give to God?" but "How much money do I need to live on?"

The gift of Giving is a special enabling of God that permits people to give sacrificially of their finances, time and talents toward the work of God. People possessing the gift of Giving may also display the gift of Faith or Stewardship. The gift of Giving is often demonstrated through a person's ability to give "free-will" offerings well in excess of the Biblical tithe. It is not uncommon for people with the gift of Giving to testify that the more they give to God, the more God blesses them so that they are able to give again.

The Apostle Paul lists the gift of Giving among other gifts in Romans 12:8. In 2 Corinthians 8:1-7, the Apostle Paul praises the Macedonian church to all the other churches because of the special grace God had given them to give to others out of their poverty. This gift is often associated with the gift of Voluntary Poverty, as many with the gift of Voluntary Poverty also have the gift of Giving. However, not all with the gift of Giving also have the gift of Voluntary Poverty.

The gift of Giving is generally expressed in three areas of life: Resources, Time and Abilities.

• Giving of Resources. Whether God has blessed you financially, or like the Macedonians, you are called to give out of your poverty, you believe God has called you to give of your financial resources for the work of ministry.

• Giving of Time. Time is a valuable resource and gift from God. It is often far easier to write a check to meet a need than it is to invest personal time. However, many people gifted with the gift of Giving believe that God has called them to invest their time to support others.

• Giving of Abilities. God has given all of us many skills and talents. Talents differ from Spiritual Gifts in that each one of us has developed our skills and talents since our childhood.

People with this gift:

- manage their finances and limit their lifestyle in order to give as much of their resources as possible.
- support the work of ministry with sacrificial gifts to advance the Kingdom.
- meet tangible needs that enable spiritual growth to occur.
- provide resources, generously and cheerfully, trusting God for His provision.
- may have a special ability to make money so that they may use it to further God's work.

Evidence:

- A. You tend to give quietly and/or secretly.
- B. You take the initiative to find needs to contribute to.
- C. You experience deep joy and satisfaction through giving.
- D. You are resourceful or have the ability to make money.
- E. It is easy for you to give large amounts of money.
- F. You are more concerned with meeting the need than with how much you actually give.
- G. You manage your own time, talents and money well.

Cautions:

- a. Giving with the wrong motives.
- b. Controlling others by your gifts.
- c. Pride.

Scriptures: Romans 12:6-8, 2 Corinthians 9:6-15, 2 Corinthians 8:2-5, Mark 12:41-44, Matthew 6:3-4

4. Craftsmanship

The gift of Craftsmanship is the distinctive ability to design and build tangible items and resources which facilitate the functioning of ministry and help to draw people to God.

The Purpose: To enhance the physical surroundings of the Body of Christ in such a way as to make them attractive, functional and glorifying to God. Craftsmen desire to become virtuosos in their craft. They like to work with their hands, using their hands to create something from nothing. Woodcraft, metal craft, sculpture, painting, sewing and software programming are all hands-on arts that require expertise/skill.

This is the gift that enables a believer to create, build, maintain or repair items used within the church.

People with this gift:

- work with wood, cloth, paint, metal, glass and other raw materials.

- make things which increase the effectiveness of others' ministries.

- design and build tangible items and resources for ministry use.

- work with different kinds of tools and are skilled with their hands.

Evidence:

- A. People ask for your help working on church facility projects.
- B. You have unique construction vision and abilities that find their greatest value and application in the local church.
- C. You find great joy in using your hands to build and create for God's glory.
- D. You tend to be resourceful and handy.

Cautions:

a. Mistaking a self-centered hobby as a Spiritual Gift.b. Protecting your work and valuing it over people.

Scriptures: Acts 9:36-39, 2 Kings 22:5-6, Exodus 28:3-4, Exodus 31:1-11, Exodus 35:30-35

5. Stewardship

The gift of Stewardship is the God-enabled ability to manage financial, human and time resources effectively in a manner that honors the Lord.

The Purpose: To effectively steward the resources of the Church for maximum strategic Kingdom impact.

The person possessing the gift of Stewardship may also display the gift of Administration and/or the gift of Giving. Jesus describes the wise manager in Luke 12:42-44: "The Lord answered, 'Who then is the faithful and wise manager, whom the master puts in charge of his servants to give them their food allowance at the proper time? It will be good for that servant whom the master finds doing so when he returns. I tell you the truth, he will put him in charge of all his possessions." Similarly, the Parable of the Talents found in Matthew 25:14-30 makes it clear that the wise steward will invest and multiply whatever God has given him.

Based upon your personality style and gift mix, you may prefer to use your gift of Stewardship in the following ways:

• Manager of Ministry Finances. People with this gift resonate with the following statement: I believe God has used my training, experience and abilities to prepare me to serve as Chief Financial Officer (or to support the CFO's duties) within the ministry.

• Budget and Financial Management Consulting. People with this gift resonate with the following statement: I believe God is calling me to help individuals, families and other organizations learn how to budget and manage their God-given resources in a God-honoring way.

• Cost-Effectiveness Analysis of Ministry Programming. People with this gift resonate with the following statement: I believe that our ministry is responsible to use its limited resources wisely for maximum ministry impact. For this reason I would be willing to support our ministry through

conducting a cost-effectiveness analysis to help our leadership plan future ministry strategy.

• Life Stewardship Mentoring. People with this gift resonate with the following statement: I believe God has called me to help others steward their lives from God's perspective by putting together a comprehensive growth and investment plan for their time, talents and money.

Evidence:

- A. You tend to steward your life wisely and are constantly evaluating your life stewardship.
- B. You are able to understand personal or organizational missions and discern how to best resource them.
- C. You are sought out for advice by others as to how they should invest their resources.
- D. You are a serious person who sees the benefit of organization, structure and coordinated effort.
- E. You are asked to serve in manager roles in organizations.

Cautions:

- a. Being so task-driven that you become fun challenged.
- b. Looking down on those who are wasteful and slothful with their resources.
- c. Counting the cost so much that you shrink back from risky promptings that require the miraculous, unforeseeable provision of God.

Scriptures: Luke 12:42-44, Matthew 25:14-30

Nurture/Fellowship Gifts:

Nurture/Fellowship gifts are divine empowerments that serve people by enabling them to feel the care and nurture of God through His people.

6. Hospitality

The gift of Hospitality is the distinctive ability to create a physical environment that makes people feel "at home," welcome and cared for by providing fellowship, food, and shelter. *The Purpose:* To create an inviting atmosphere that provides for people's needs, encourages them to be themselves and feel like a valued part of the Body.

It is the special ability God gives to some to provide an open home and warm welcome to those in need of food, lodging, and fellowship. It involves a readiness to invite strangers to your home (or church) for the sake of the Gospel.

People with this gift:

- provide an environment where people feel valued and cared for.
- meet new people and help them feel welcomed.
- create a safe and comfortable setting where relationships can develop.
- seek ways to connect people together into meaningful relationships.
- set people at ease in unfamiliar surroundings.

Evidence:

- A. New people enjoy your company and tend to migrate to you.
- B. You give without expecting in return.
- C. You experience joy by helping others feel "at home" and cared for.
- D. You love a party, but you enjoy giving one even more.
- E. You eagerly open your home to others.

Cautions:

- a. The feeling of self pity, as if you are the only one serving in this way.
- b. Over committing yourself and potentially neglecting those closest to you.
- c. Viewing your ministry basically as "Entertaining People."

Scriptures: 1 Peter 4:9-10, Romans 12:9-13, Acts 16:14-15, Luke 10:38, Hebrews 13:1-2, Mark 10:46-52

7. Mercy/Compassion

The gift of Mercy is the distinctive ability to feel sincere empathy and compassion, and cheerfully and practically help those who are suffering or are in need by putting compassion into action with acts of love that help alleviate their distress.

The Purpose: To bring relief, comfort and hope to people who are hurting in order to help restore them to a place of peace and productivity.

People with this gift:

- focus upon alleviating the sources of pain or discomfort in suffering people.
- address the needs of the lonely and forgotten.
- express love, grace, and dignity to those facing hardships and crisis.
- serve in difficult or unsightly circumstances and do so cheerfully.
- concern themselves with individual or social issues that oppress people.

Evidence:

- A. You are drawn towards the hurts of others.
- B. You are easily and fully in touch with your emotions.
- C. The suffering of others disturbs your soul.
- D. People's feelings are more important to you than what they do.
- E. You cheerfully inconvenience yourself for the needs of others.

Cautions:

- a. A tendency to see life with a slightly negative perspective.
- b. The inability to say NO, or thinking you can meet everyone's needs.
- c. Actions based on emotions without thinking issues through which can create dependencies or diminish people's dignity.
- d. Failure to be firm when necessary.

Scriptures: Romans 12:6-8, Luke 7:12-15, Luke 10:30-37, Matthew 20:29-34, Matthew 25:34-40, Mark 9:41, Mark 10:46-52, Matthew 5:7

8. Community Builder

The gift of Community Builder is the special ability to share one's participation in Christ with the members of His Body and create koinonia, that unique type of inclusive fellowship which characterized the early Christian church.

The Purpose: To bring an overall sense of love, wholeness and unity to the body of Christian believers.

Those with this gift have a desire to see themselves along with others grow further in their walk and relationship with Jesus Christ. They enjoy participating in and planning for moments where various numbers of individuals are able to gather for the study of God's Word, discussion, dialogue and prayer. They are especially suited for leading in a small group ministry where growth in faith and Christian living are embraced and encouraged. These individuals also tend to know how to make others feel welcome and typically generate a sense of safety to those around them. They understand the power of positive peer pressure and seek to create relational environments that live out the "one another" commands of Scripture. They are usually characterized by an unusually high capability to extend grace and understanding to difficult and diverse populations. They have an amazing ability to "bear with one another in love" (Ephesians 4:2, Colossians 3:13). Community builders are Relational Artists and they are skilled in the art of relationshipbuilding. They are impeccable hosts. They know how to throw a party, but more importantly, they know how to make every participant at that party feel valued. Relational Artists thrive at networking people with people. People skills, manners, appropriateness and tact are defining traits of the Community Builders.

People with this gift:

- focus on gathering people to seek God together and learn about God through one another.
- express love, grace and dignity to both difficult and diverse populations of people.

- love creating small group environments where people are stimulated to trust God in and through one another and move toward deeper levels of intimacy with God and one another.
- concern themselves with individual differences that divide people and strive to bring about unity and forbearance.

Evidence:

- A. You easily identify the needs of others around you.
- B. You have a genuine desire to connect with others.
- C. You gain a sense of satisfaction and joy through connecting the disconnected.
- D. You offer love, grace and dignity to both difficult and different people.

Cautions:

- a. Getting over-extended relationally.
- b. Avoiding confrontation and church discipline.
- c. Frustrations with the lack of transformation possible in small group environments.

Scriptures: Mark 14:22-25, Romans 10:12, 1 Corinthians 12:12-13, Galatians 3:28, Philippians 4:1,10

Intervention Gifts:

Intervention gifts are divine empowerments that serve people by enabling them to experience the supernatural power of God at work freeing them to live abundantly.

9. Healing

The gift of Healing is the distinctive ability to be used as a human intermediary through whom God's supernatural power is applied to a person's need for wholeness (spiritual, emotional, intellectual and physical).

The Purpose: To bring spiritual, emotional, intellectual and physical wholeness and health to individuals and the Body of Christ, as well as lift and exalt the name of Jesus.

The gift of Healing is the special ability God gives to some to serve as a human instrument through whom it pleases Him to cure illness and restore health (physically, emotionally, mentally or spiritually) apart from the use of natural means. It is the divine enablement to be God's means for restoring people to wholeness. This gift is exercised when one prays, touches or speaks words that bring healing to others.

The use of this gift is one way that Jesus proved His message that "the Kingdom of God is at hand," and it still proves that message today through those whom the Holy Spirit moves to heal. The gift of Healing is the ability given by God to enable some Christ Followers to pray over people suffering illness with the result that the sick receive healing. Healing may be instantaneous or take place over time, but the healing will be accomplished in such a manner that God, not the gifted person, receives the credit. A person possessing the gift of Healing will often also possess the additional gifts of Faith and/or Evangelism.

In 1 Corinthians 12:9 and 28, the Apostle Paul lists the gift of Healing as one of many potential gifts granted by the Holy Spirit. In James 5:13-20, the Church is instructed to pray over the sick and the prayer of faith will make the sick person well. In Acts 9:32-35 we find one of many examples of instantaneous healing accomplished by the Holy Spirit through the Apostle Peter. In addition, the ministry of Jesus was marked by his ability to heal. Jesus himself exclaimed in John 14:12-14 "I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father. You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it."

People with this gift:

- demonstrate the power of God.
- bring restoration to the sick and diseased. - authenticate a message from God through
- healing.
- use it as an opportunity to communicate a Biblical truth and to see God glorified.
- pray, touch or speak words that miraculously bring healing to one's body.

Evidence:

- A. People have been healed when you prayed for them.
- B. People have sought you out to pray for physical, emotional, spiritual and intellectual healing.
- C. You have a great measure of faith and spend much time in prayer.

Cautions:

- a. Thinking that you can heal others whenever you desire.
- b. Believing that it is your power and not God's.
- c. Believing that if sick people just had more faith, they would be healed.
- d. Believing that it is always God's will to heal someone.

Scriptures: 1 Corinthians 12:7-11,

1 Corinthians 12:28-31, Acts 3:1-16, Acts 14:8-10, James 5:14-16, Luke 9:1-2, Acts 9:32-35, Acts 28:7-10, Mark 2:1-12

10. Miracles

The gift of Miracles is the distinctive ability as an instrument or agent of God to perform supernatural acts which alter the expected course of nature.

The Purpose: To change or alter the expected course of nature in order to draw attention to God, accomplish his purposes and glorify His name.

It is the gift to serve as a human intermediary through whom God may perform powerful acts that are perceived by observers to have altered the ordinary course of nature.

People with this gift:

- speak God's truth and may have it authenticated by an accompanying miracle.
- express confidence in God's faithfulness and ability to manifest Christ's presence.
- bring the ministry and message of Jesus Christ with power.
- claim God to be the source of miracles and glorify the Lord.
- represent Christ and, through this gift, point people to a relationship with Christ.

Evidence:

- A. God has used you to alter the expected course of nature.
- B. You have extraordinary faith.
- C. God has answered your specific prayers with miraculous results.
- D. You tend to be bold and convincing.

Cautions:

- a. Thinking that you are the source of power or the cause behind the miracle.
- b. Drawing attention to yourself or taking any credit at all for the miraculous results.

Scriptures: 1 Corinthians 12:7-11, 1 Corinthians 12:28-31, Mark 16:17-18, Acts 9:36-42, Acts 20:9-12, Hebrews 2:4, Romans 15:17-19, Acts 8:13, Acts 19:11-12

11. Deliverance/Exorcism/Ekballism

The gift of Deliverance is the distinctive ability to deliver people who are being harassed, attacked, oppressed or possessed by a demonic presence.

The Purpose: To free people up from harassment, attack, oppression and possession by evil spirits.

It is the special ability that God gives certain members of the Body of Christ to cast out demons and evil spirits in the name of Jesus Christ. The gift of Exorcism is the special ability to confront demonic forces within the lives of spiritually oppressed people, and to help such people find spiritual freedom in Christ Jesus. People with the

gift of Exorcism may also display the gifts of Spirit Discernment and Intercessory Prayer. An Exorcist will conduct spiritual warfare utilizing prayer and fasting; help oppressed people understand their freedom, authority and identity in Christ Jesus; and through direct confrontation of demonic spirits, gain freedom for them through the name and authority of Jesus Christ.

Ekballism: Traditionally, this gift is known as Exorcism, which comes from the Greek word exorkizo, and means to extract by an oath. In spiritual terms this refers to the incantations and spells used by pagans to extract the demonic. Scripturally, this term is only used in relation to the demonic to describe the sons of Sceva's work (Acts 19:13). Wherever Jesus, an apostle, or other believer casts out a demon, the Greek term is ekballo, which means to eject, pluck out, or send away. This term is command-driven, and not dependent upon a formula. In Christian life the term Ekballism demonstrates the power we have in Jesus, and minimizes the need for a formula to accomplish Christ's work. Ekballism is a term that separates the power of Christ from the confusion of spiritism around the world. Jesus gave His apostles the authority to cast out demons (Mark 3:14-15; 6:13), and the gift was used during the earliest days of the church (Acts 15:16; 16:16-18). Although Western society often dismisses spiritual powers with rational explanations, there is no reason to believe that evil spirits are no longer at work in our world. However, those with this gift should be discerning in their use of it, and not develop an excessive preoccupation with demons and evil spirits. The Christian focus should be on the victory won in Jesus Christ, and the salvation and abundant life He offers, not the ever-present forces of evil in this world. The first spirit to look for is always the Holy Spirit.

Evidence:

- A. You believe that you have the authority to cast out demons in Jesus' name.
- B. You have been used by God to release people from demonic harassment, oppression or possession.
- C. You are asked to pray for people suffering great hardships and uncontrollable behavioral problems.

Cautions:

- a. Underestimating the power of evil to creep into our lives.
- b. Spiritual superiority resulting in pride rather than humility and walking in the authority of God.
- c. Feeling that their gift is seen as weird and misunderstood by people who don't understand spiritual warfare.

Scriptures: Matthew 12:22-32; Acts 8:5-8; Romans 8:38-39; Ephesians 6:10-12. There are many passages that describe the gift of Exorcism in practice. Luke 10:16-24, Luke 11:14-28; Matthew 10:1; Mark 6:7; 9:38; 16:17 are but a few. The disciples cast them out in Luke 10:17-20; Acts 5:16; Paul in Acts 16:16–18; 19:12; by Philip in Acts 8:7

Note: Very often inner healing needs to occur before deliverance.

12. Intercession/Prayer

The gift of Intercession is the distinctive ability to pray for significant lengths of time, on a regular basis, on behalf of and for others, and see frequent and specific answers to prayer to a degree much greater than that which is experienced by the average Christian.

The Purpose: To pray fervently according to the Spirit of God for specific needs in the Body of Christ, as well as for the lost.

Biblical examples and instruction regarding Intercessory Prayer include Colossians 4:12-13. The narrative states, "Epaphras is always wrestling in prayer for you, that you may stand firm in all the will of God, mature and fully assured." Again in Colossians 1:9, "For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you and asking God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding...." In 1 Timothy 2:1, the Apostle Paul states: "I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone...." Jesus ever lives to make intercession (Hebrews 7:25) and the Holy Spirit makes intercession for us (Romans 8:26, 27, 34). True intercessors enter into the ongoing work of Jesus and the Holy Spirit. While God desires all Christ Followers to communicate with him through regular prayer, the gift of Intercessory Prayer is a special endowment of the Holy Spirit that transforms the Christ Follower into a "Prayer Warrior" for the sake of other people and other ministries. The label "Prayer Warrior" is derived from the belief that the person gifted with Intercessory Prayer stands on the front lines of spiritual warfare. This gift is sadly overlooked in the Church because it is seldom utilized in public. However, without Prayer Warriors many visible ministry accomplishments would probably not be successful.

People with this gift:

- feel compelled to earnestly pray on behalf of someone or some cause.
- have a daily awareness of the spiritual battles being waged and pray.
- are convinced God moves in direct response to prayer.
- pray in response to the leading of the Spirit, whether they understand it or not.
- exercise authority and power for the protection of others and for equipping them to serve.

Evidence:

- A. You see frequent and specific answers to your prayers.
- B. You pray for extended periods of time on a regular basis.
- C. You have a passion to pray for the lost.
- D. You find great fulfillment in deep and intensive prayer.
- E. You pray for others and "kingdom issues" far more than you pray for yourself.
- F. You have a daily awareness of ongoing spiritual battles.
- G. You pray in response to a leading from the Spirit, whether you understand it or not.

Cautions:

- a. Assuming you are the final authority when you believe you hear from God.
- b. Spiritual superiority resulting in pride.
- c. Feeling that your gift is not valued. (Remember that interceding for others is your ministry and spiritual contribution to the Body of Christ).

Scriptures: Ephesians 6:18, 1 Timothy 2:1-2, 1 Kings 13:6, Luke 11:1-10, Matthew 6:6-15, Mark 11:22-25, James 5:14-16, Colossians 1:9-12, Colossians 4:12-13, 1 Thessalonians 3:10, Romans 8:26-27, John 17:9-26 (Jesus' prayer to the Father)

Life Focus Gifts:

Life Focus gifts are divine empowerments that serve people by enabling them to be inspired towards obedience through sacrificial examples of faith in God's preferable future.

13. Faith

The gift of Faith is the special conviction God gives to some to be firmly persuaded of God's power and promises to accomplish His will and purpose, and to display such a confidence in Him and His Word that circumstances and obstacles do not shake that conviction.

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Appendix F: Spiritual Gifts Definitions

The Purpose: To lift the Body of Christ above common distractions and discouragements to believe that God will fulfill even His seemingly impossible promises.

It is the divine enablement to act on God's promises with confidence and unwavering belief in God's ability to fulfill his purposes and bring about His preferable future despite the circumstances.

Every Christ Follower has established a relationship with God through faith in the work and person of Jesus Christ. Beyond that, however, the gift of Faith enables a person to trust God for remarkable provision, especially in circumstances that appear to offer no viable solution. The person gifted with Faith often displays unusual confidence in the will and purposes of God. Such a gifted person exhibits a lack of anxiety and communicates to others peace and assurance. People gifted with Faith may become frustrated with others, or with their church leaders, for moving too slowly or for supporting a limited vision or easily obtained goals. People gifted with Faith just know that God wants to do more through us than we could think or imagine (Ephesians 3:20).

The gift of Faith is often combined with miracles (Matthew 7:20) or healing (Matthew 17:17-21). 1 Corinthians 12:9 specifically identifies Faith within its list of gifts granted by the Holy Spirit. Hebrews 11 portrays a lineage of people who possessed great faith in God. James 2:22-24 makes it clear that true faith will be evidenced by the actions taken by the person claiming to have faith. All Christians need faith for Salvation (Ephesians 2:8) to build a right relationship with God (Colossians 2:6) and to please God (Hebrews 11:6). The gift of Faith enhances the personal spiritual growth of others.

Within the Church, faith can find expression in many ways. However, based upon your personality

type, gift mix and passions, you may be more inclined to utilize the gift of Faith in one of the following ways:

- Faith in God's promises regarding physical, emotional or spiritual restoration. When the gift of Faith is used in this manner, the person possessing the gift of Faith may also possess the gift of Healing, Discernment or Intercessory Prayer.
- Faith in God's promises regarding financial or material provision. When the gift of Faith is used in this manner, the person possessing the gift of Faith may also possess the gift of Giving, Stewardship or Encouragement. People with the gift of Faith, expressed in the area of finance and material provision, will likely demonstrate this gift through personal giving well above their tithe. In addition, when they see a person or family in need, they are likely to extend themselves to meet that need.

• Faith in God's assurances regarding risky ministry opportunities. People with the gift of Faith are often frustrated when they perceive people and ministries taking small, manageable risks for Christ's Kingdom. They know that God can do more than we think or imagine. People with the gift of Faith can dream big because they are enabled by the Holy Spirit to trust big. For this reason, this type of gifted person will gravitate to roles and leaders who desire to accomplish great things for the Kingdom.

People with this gift:

- believe the promises of God and inspire others to do the same.
- act with complete confidence in God's ability to overcome obstacles.
- demonstrate an attitude of trust in God's will and his promises.
- advance the cause of Christ because they go forward when others will not.
- ask God for what is needed and trust him for his provision.

Evidence:

- A. You tend to have a consistently positive disposition and optimistic outlook on life.
- B. You are confident about the promises of God.
- C. Other people's faith is increased when they are around you.

Cautions:

- a. You may tend to downplay the value of practical planning and preparation.
- b. You may want to tell others what will and won't happen if they only had more faith.

Scriptures: 1 Corinthians 12:7-11, Mark 5:25-34, Acts 27:21-25, Hebrews 11, Romans 4:18-21

14. Martyrdom

The gift of Martyrdom is the distinctive ability to surrender one's life for the cause of Christ and love those who have chosen to be your enemy.

The Purpose: To confront evil with good and lay down our lives in love so that others might know God, in order to be faithful to God.

It is the ability to undergo suffering for witnessing to the faith even to death while consistently displaying a joyous and victorious attitude that brings glory to God. It empowers one to have a willingness to die, whether or not death actually occurs.

People with this gift:

- are empowered by God to minister in dangerous areas of the world.
- are unique in their courage and bravery when serving others.
- are definitely forceful though not violent men and women for God.

Evidence:

- A. You have the ability to forgive those who hurt you and who profess to be your enemies.
- B. You confront evil with good on a regular basis with a sense of abandonment that gets people's attention.

C. You desire to be a role model of love in order for others to see God's love enfleshed.

Cautions:

- a. Being overzealous when people aren't really opposing you.
- b. Spiritual superiority resulting in pride.
- c. Feeling that your gift is not valued, even if those around you don't seem to want to commit as passionately as you.

Scriptures: Psalm 44:22, Matthew 10:39, John 12:25. Matthew 23:34-35; Luke 9:24

15. Celibacy

The gift of Celibacy is the special ability God gives to some to voluntarily remain single, abstain from sexual activity and remain unmarried without regret and with the ability to maintain control over sexual impulses, so as to serve the Lord without distraction.

The Purpose: To free someone up for lovingly building contagious Christian communities without the struggle and division that comes from sexual desires.

Celibacy is a state totally opposed to all of the biological, social, and emotional needs espoused by secular society and it resists those built into man or woman by God. Only God is able to overrule our human instincts and by grace control them so that a person can remain unmarried. This is often formalized by a person called to this through the use of spiritual vows. Being unmarried is not necessarily the same as having this gift. Those who have this gift remain single because they feel they can serve the Lord more fully that way.

People with this gift:

- remain single so as to be able to devote themselves completely to ministry.
- have other gifts that they are able to use more effectively because they are celibate.

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Evidence:

- A. You have a much lower than normal sexual desire.
- B. You have an ability to see men and women as people and not sexual objects of desire.

Cautions:

- a. Being insensitive to the struggle of others.
- b. Spiritual superiority resulting in pride.
- c. Avoid feeling different and incomplete because you are not married and building a nuclear family, rather your devotion can be focused on building the family of God.

Scriptures: Matthew 19:10–12; 1 Corinthians 7:1, 2, 7–9, 25, 26, 32–40; 1 Corinthians 9:5; 1 Timothy 4:1–3; Revelation 14:1-5

16. Voluntary Poverty

The gift of Voluntary Poverty is the distinctive ability to be a channel of God's loving presence by living a life of cheerful, voluntary simplicity or poverty in order to identify with Jesus and the poor.

The Purpose: To bring honor and glory to God and serve those in need by embracing a contented life style of simplicity, and generously sharing every thing else you have with those in need, as God guides.

It is the special ability God gives to some to purposely live an impoverished lifestyle to serve and aid others with their material resources. It is the special ability that God gives to some members of the Body of Christ to renounce material comfort and luxury and adopt a personal lifestyle equivalent to that of people living at the poverty level in a given society, in order to serve God more effectively.

People with this gift:

- will often choose to live among people who are considered poverty-stricken.
- live at a poverty level although they have the means to live at a higher standard of living.
- choose this lifestyle in order to minister more effectively to people through identification.

Evidence:

- A. You have a generous heart and an ability to sacrifice so that other's needs might be met.
- B. You love the freedom and focus that a life of simplicity provides.
- C. You find great satisfaction and contentment in knowing that you are doing everything you can to maximize your resources and bless as many people as possible.

Cautions:

- a. Too quickly judging those who are rich in this world as hoarders, when God might have called them to identify with wealthy people and be a light in their lives.
- b. Spiritual superiority resulting in pride.

Scriptures: James 1:9-10, Matthew 5:42, Matthew 8:20, Psalm 146:7, 1 Corinthians 13:1-3, 2 Corinthians 8:9, Acts 2:44-45, Acts 4:32-35

Guidance Gifts:

Guidance gifts are divine empowerments that serve people by enabling them to understand God's guidance for their lives.

17. Exhortation/Disciple Maker

The gift of Exhortation/Disciple Maker is the special ability God gives some believers to help strengthen weak, faltering, growing and fainthearted Christians in such a way that they are motivated to live Christ-centered lives.

The Purpose: To bring health and maturity to the Body of Christ through discipling and mentoring people in Christlikeness.

It is the ability to help others reach their full potential by means of encouraging, challenging, comforting and guiding. It is the divine enablement to present truth so as to strengthen or urge to action those who are discouraged or wavering in their faith. It is the special ability to counsel or challenge others toward a healthy relationship with Jesus Christ. Often, the gift of Exhortation is utilized to motivate the Church in general or a Christ Follower in particular, to make God-honoring choices. If sensitivity and tact are not properly developed, the person gifted with Exhortation/Disciple Maker may not immediately be appreciated.

A person possessing the gift of Exhortation/Disciple Maker is generally concerned with the healthy spiritual development of people within their circle of influence. A Disciple Maker will often display the ministry traits of Pastor and Teacher. The Disciple Maker prefers to minister to small groups or within a one-on-one mentoring relationship. The Disciple Maker is skilled at developing deep interpersonal relationships, values wisdom and likes to help others identify and achieve spiritual development goals.

The gift of Exhortation/Disciple Maker is somewhat similar to the role of the Old Testament prophets in challenging God's people to remain faithful and pointing the way to live in obedience to God. While the prophets were not immediately valued and often persecuted, their service was indispensable to the spiritual health and vitality of the Biblical faith community.

People who possess the gift of Exhortation will not avoid conflict. It is not that they love conflict. In fact, everything inside them may hate conflict. People with the gift of Exhortation feel a deep responsibility before God to challenge and encourage those who may be taking a path that does not honor the Lord, to correct their misguided choices. In Acts 14:22, the Apostle Paul consistently serves to "strengthen the disciples and to encourage them to remain true to the faith." In Acts 11:23, Barnabas encouraged the people of Antioch to remain true to the Lord with all their hearts. Again, in 1 Thessalonians 2:12, the Apostle Paul describes their ministry among the Thessalonians as "encouraging, comforting and urging you to live lives worthy of God, who calls you into his kingdom and glory." The gift of Exhortation/Disciple Maker is always expressed in a "personal appeal" even when focused on a group. The group is comprised of individuals, and all of them are responsible for their own decisions and actions before God. This is why people often react defensively when first hearing a word of exhortation.

When this gift is utilized appropriately, it will either be received by humble and contrite hearts, or the recipients will respond with hostility and transference. They may assert that the person using the gift of Exhortation/Disciple Maker is judgmental, critical or harsh. For this reason, people utilizing the gift of Exhortation/Disciple Maker should make every effort to ensure that "how" they communicate does not get in the way of "what" they are called to communicate on God's behalf. However, even when every effort has been made to communicate a word of exhortation carefully and lovingly, the exhorter should not be surprised if the communication is initially rejected ... along with the one who communicated the message. People with the gift of Exhortation/Disciple Maker quickly learn that they need to give the Holy Spirit an opportunity to do his work of conviction and sanctification. People with this gift see God's potential in the person and speak to that potential.

Depending upon the personality traits, gift mix and passions of the Disciple Makers, they will usually prefer to use their gift in one of the following three ways:

• Pastoral Shepherding. Pastoral Shepherding has more to do with caring for and nurturing small groups of Christ Followers than it does with "running a church." Pastoral Shepherds passionately care for the welfare of the group as well as the individuals who comprise the group. In Acts 20:27-32, Paul gives his instructions to the Ephesian pastoral leaders:

"Guard yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood...." Their focus is on people's progress towards Christlikeness. They usually function best when leading covenant growth groups whose purpose is transformational growth towards Christlikeness.

• Biblical Instructor. Biblical Instructors care about people, but they prefer to focus on communicating Biblical concepts and truths to people. Biblical Instructors make excellent Bible study leaders, Sunday school teachers and small group leaders when the need of the small group is for instruction rather than pastoral care. In Acts 8:26-40, Philip utilizes his gift of Disciple Maker in an instructor capacity when he conducts a Bible study with the Ethiopian leader.

• Personal Mentor. Personal Mentors invest their lives into the lives of others and function like spiritual parents to those they are helping to grow. They prefer intense one-on-one relationships. They feel a personal responsibility for the spiritual welfare of their disciples. The account of Priscilla, Aquilla and Apollos in Acts 18:24-28 is an excellent example of Personal Mentorship. Priscilla and Aquilla invited Apollos to live with them while they mentored and instructed him. This intense mentorship was exactly what Apollos required in order to be Biblically and spiritually prepared to support the ministry of the Apostle Paul.

People with this gift:

- come to the side of those who are weak in spirit to strengthen them.
- challenge or confront others to trust and hope in the promises of God.
- urge others to action by applying Biblical truth.
- offer advice, an outline for a solution, or a program for progress.
- motivate others to grow.
- develop deep relationships with those they mentor.

Evidence:

- A. Challenging others to grow is easy for you and you enjoy it.
- B. You are not afraid to rebuke if necessary.
- C. You have a good understanding of the faith and personal maturity in Christ and are being mentored according to a personal growth plan.
- D. You are able to motivate others, whether one to one, in small groups or occasionally in larger groups.
- E. You have good people skills.

Cautions:

- a. Anything less than 100% sincerity when encouraging others.
- b. Rebuking without love.
- c. Getting overloaded with people demands.

Scriptures: 1 Timothy 5:1-2, Hebrews 3:13 (King James Version), Hebrews 13:22, 1 Thessalonians 5:14 (King James Version), Acts 14:21-23, 1 Timothy 4:13-14, Acts 5, Acts 20:27-32, Acts 8:26-40, Acts 18:24-28

18. Encouragement

The gift of Encouragement is the special ability God gives some believers to offer comfort, words of encouragement, hope and reassurance to discouraged, weak or troubled Christians in such a way that they gain a positive mental, emotional and spiritual perspective on their circumstances.

The Purpose: To bring health and wholeness to the Body of Christ through well-chosen and anointed words, gifts, letters and other forms of communication.

Encouragers are people who find the positive in any situation. For them, "the glass is always half full." Encouragers are at their best when they can motivate the assembly of Christ Followers to persevere in the struggle against sin and to strive for the accomplishment of God's mission for the Church. The word Encouragement means "to instill courage and hope into another person." Romans 12:8 and Hebrews 10:24, 25 instruct all Christ Followers to "encourage one another."

This gift of Encouragement is clearly exemplified in the life of a man named Joseph. Joseph is first mentioned in Acts 4:36 and 37. In this account we learn that Joseph sold all that he had and laid the money at the feet of the Apostles. From that time on, Joseph's name was changed to "Barnabas" which means "Son of Encouragement." In Acts 9:26 and 27 we learn that when all the disciples were afraid of Paul (Saul) and questioned whether his conversion was real, it was Barnabas who risked his own life to visit Paul and to introduce him to the body of believers. In Acts 13, the Holy Spirit instructed the Church at Antioch to set apart Paul and Barnabas for a special missionary work ... and so Barnabas became Paul's ministry partner.

Following Barnabas' encouragement role, we can identify three major ways in which the gift of Encouragement may express itself within the Church. Your personality style and calling from the Holy Spirit may enable you to focus the use of your gift.

• Sacrificing Self for the Welfare of Others. Barnabas sold all he had for the welfare of others within the Church. Encouragement is best received by others when the encourager will not receive any personal benefit from the encouragement offered. There are many hurt and damaged people in this sinful world. They have been "used and abused." Their level of trust in others is minimal. Sacrificial encouragement can help restore and heal.

• Supporting Risky Ministry Ventures. New ministry ventures are risky. Often people attempting to begin a new church, ministry or mission have critical "voices" in their life. In addition, doubt and fear of failure naturally linger in their minds. New ministry developers need to be reminded that God is in control, and that nothing that is of God will ever fail. There is no greater encouragement to the new ministry developer than when the "Encourager" gets personally involved and "takes the risk" with everyone else. After all, the Encourager possesses significant confidence in the nature and purposes of God. Like Barnabas, Encouragers can often take the risks that others are afraid to take.

• Serving Ministry Leadership. Leadership is lonely and emotionally draining. Typically, people seek to receive from the ministry leader, but very few seek to minister to the ministry leader. Encouragers are essential to the success of any ministry leader.

People with this gift:

- come to the side of those who are discouraged to reassure them and give them hope.
- emphasize God's promises and confidence in his will.

Evidence:

- A. Encouraging others is easy for you and you enjoy it.
- B. You are not afraid to approach those who are discouraged and in a bad mood.
- C. You have a good self-image and are generally a confident person.
- D. You are able to motivate others, whether one to one, in small groups or occasionally in larger groups.
- E. You have good people skills.

Cautions:

- a. Anything less than 100% sincerity when encouraging others.
- b. Being unwilling to see the dark side of people's lives.
- c. Not listening to both sides of a conflict.

Scriptures: Romans 12:6-8, Titus 1:9, Acts 11:23-24, Acts 14:21-22, 1 Thessalonians 2:11-12, 1 Thessalonians 5:9-11

19. Wisdom

The gift of Wisdom is the distinctive ability to discern the mind of God and apply Scriptural truth to a specific situation in order to make the right choices and help others move in the right direction.

The Purpose: To apply Scriptural truth and God's heart to everyday situations so that decisions can be made in such a way as to please God.

It is the special ability that God gives to certain members of the Body of Christ to receive insight into how knowledge may best be applied to specific needs arising in the Body of Christ. It is the gift that allows the believer to sort through desires, feelings, thoughts and capabilities in order to determine what solution would be best for the individual believer or the community of believers.

It is the ability to apply knowledge to life in such a way as to make spiritual truths quite relevant and practical in proper decision-making and daily life situations. The gift of Wisdom is the special ability given by God to enable a person to "know the right thing to do, and how to do it rightly." When the counsel of a godly person gifted with Wisdom is followed, God's will is accomplished, God is honored, and the mission of the ministry will find success. A person possessing the gift of Wisdom may also display the gift of Knowledge. The Apostle Paul identifies the gift of "A Message of Wisdom" among many other Spiritual Gifts in 1 Corinthians 12:8. Ephesians 1:7 states "I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit [1:17, or a spirit] of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better." Colossians 1:9 continues this theme, "For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you and asking God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding." James 1:5 instructs all Christ Followers: "If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him."

People with this gift:

- focus on the unseen consequences in determining the next steps to take.
- receive an understanding of what is necessary to meet the needs of the Body.

- provide divinely given solutions or direction in the midst of conflict and confusion.
- hear the Spirit provide direction for God's best in a given situation.
- apply spiritual truth in specific and practical ways.

Evidence:

- A. Making the right decision in difficult situations is easy for you.
- B. You possess good common sense and people seek you out for counsel about their problems.
- C. You have a practical nature when it comes to the application of wisdom.
- D. You have the ability to see situations from God's perspective.
- E. You find insightful and creative ways of solving problems.

Cautions:

- a. Believing you are the source of the wisdom.
- b. Using wisdom with impure motives.
- c. Looking down on those who don't have the gift of wisdom.

Scriptures: 1 Corinthians 12:7-11, James 3:13-18, 2 Chronicles 1:7-11, Acts 6:3-10, 1 Kings 3:16-28, 1 Corinthians 2:6-13, James 1:5-8

20. Knowledge

The gift of Knowledge is the distinctive ability to know facts and insights about life that are revealed by the Holy Spirit.

The Purpose: To guide, encourage and challenge people with a timely fact or insight which produces an "Epiphany" moment, opening people up to the ministry of God.

It is the special gift whereby the Spirit enables certain Christians to understand in an exceptional way the great truths from God so that they can pray or reveal these facts and insights to others. It is the divine enablement to bring truth to the Body through a revelation or Biblical insight.

The "Word of Knowledge" given to an individual or to the assembly of Christ Followers will always

be supported by the teachings and principles of Scripture. 1 Corinthians 12:8 identifies the gift of the Word of Knowledge among many other Spiritual Gifts. A dramatic example of the Word of Knowledge in action can be found in Acts 5:1-11. Within this passage, a married couple seeks to lie to the Apostle Paul, to the Holy Spirit and to the Church. The Holy Spirit reveals the truth to Peter, and then disciplines the married couple. Jesus was given special insight and facts from the Holy Spirit about the woman at the well, so that she could know that God cares for her.

People with this gift:

- receive facts from the Holy Spirit which enable them to better serve the Body.
- search the Scriptures for insight, understanding and truth.
- gain knowledge not attained by natural means.
- have been given spiritually-discerned insight and understanding that serves the church.

Evidence:

- A. You have been used by God to speak a word of knowledge into someone's life.
- B. You have received a Word of Knowledge which informed your prayer life.
- C. In situations where you are providing spiritual counsel to people, you have received divine facts and insights about them that inspired them to open themselves up to God.
- D. You believe that God guides and empowers people through the Holy Spirit.

Cautions:

- a. Relying solely on spiritual insight and neglecting the study of the Scriptures.
- b. Pride or arrogance brought about through a display of knowledge.

Scriptures: Mark 2:6-8, 1 Corinthians 12:7-11, 2 Chronicles 1:7-12, Colossians 2:2-3, 2 Corinthians 11:6, Daniel 2:20-21, Proverbs 2:6, Proverbs 9:10, Psalms 119:66, Jeremiah 3:15, Acts 5 (Peter was given a word of knowledge), John 1:45-50, John 4:1-42 (Jesus with the woman at the well)

21. Prophecy

The gift of Prophecy is the divine enablement to receive messages from God and communicate those messages in a timely and relevant manner for understanding, correction, repentance, comfort, exhortation or edification.

The Purpose: To deliver the truth of God with divine insight and authority in order that people repent of sin and live for God.

There may be immediate or future implications. It is the distinctive ability to boldly declare the heart of God, regardless of the consequences, calling people to righteous living and guiding them into God's preferable future for their life. It reminds us that the word of God has life. The words of a Prophet will always be supported by the principles and teachings of Scripture. Prophecy is the current word of God and the Bible is the continuous word of God. Prophecy is speaking to people on God's behalf. Speaking in tongues is speaking to God. Depending upon your personally type and unique gift-mix, God may prefer to utilize your gift of Prophecy in the following ways.

• Interpretation of Dreams - The gift of Interpretation of Dreams is a special insight given by God which interprets the dreams of others in order to reveal prophetic messages from God concerning someone's life and circumstances. Dreams from God function like a Word of Knowledge that need interpretation and application.

• Foretelling Future Events - Acts 21:10-11 is an excellent example of Prophecy as foretelling events. The passages reads: "After we had been there a number of days, a prophet named Agabus came down from Judea. Coming over to us, he took Paul's belt, tied his own hands and feet with it and said, "The Holy Spirit says, 'In this way the Jews of Jerusalem will bind the owner of this belt and will hand him over to the Gentiles.""

People with this gift:

- expose sin or deception in others for the purpose of reconciliation.
- speak a timely word from God causing conviction, repentance, edification and release.
- see truth that others often fail to see and challenge them to respond.
- warn of God's immediate or future judgment if there is no repentance, at the same time sharing God's wisdom.
- understand God's heart through experiences He takes them through.

Evidence:

- A. A bold sense of confidence in speaking for God.
- B. A hatred of sin.
- C. A passionate reliance upon the Word of God.
- D. A desire to see lives change as a result of hearing God's truth.
- E. You possess the gift of Discernment.
- F. You speak a timely word from God causing conviction, repentance and edification.
- G. You expose sin or deception in others for the purpose of reconciliation.

Cautions:

- a. Relating to people as groups rather than as individuals.
- b. Relating to people too harshly.
- c. Lacking in flexibility.
- d. Focusing more on law than grace.
- e. Listeners may reject the message if not spoken with love and compassion.

Scriptures: 1 Corinthians 12:7-11, Romans 12:6-8, Ephesians 4:11-13, 1 Corinthians 12:28-31, Deuteronomy 18:18-22, 1 Corinthians 14:1-5, 1 Corinthians 14:24-25, 1 Corinthians 14:30-33, 1 Corinthians 14:37-40, Acts 2:37-40 (Peter), Acts 7:51-53 (Stephen), Acts 26:24 (Paul), Revelation 4:1, 2 Samuel 15:27, 2 Samuel 24:11, 2 Chronicles 9:29, 2 Chronicles 29:30

22. Discernment/Distinguishing Spirits

The gift of Discernment is the distinctive ability to know with assurance whether certain behavior or teaching is from God, Satan, human error or human power.

The Purpose: To prevent confusion and false teaching from infiltrating the Body of Christ by discerning where the Holy Spirit of God is at work.

It is the divine enablement to distinguish between truth and error, to discern the spirits, differentiating between good and evil, right and wrong. Spiritual Discernment is a special ability to be aware of the presence of godly and demonic spiritual forces. It is an important gift for the Church because often the work of Satan can appear on the surface to be very positive. Without the gift of Discernment, Satan could easily lead many people away from following Christ.

1 Corinthians 12:10 specifically lists "Discerning of Spirits" in the Apostle Paul's gift list. 1 John 4:1-6 instructs the Church to "test the spirits." Acts 16:16-19 relates how the Apostle Paul used the gift of "Discerning of Spirits" when he encountered a slave girl who was possessed by an evil spirit masquerading as a spirit of light.

The primary purpose of the gift of Discernment is to discern the Holy Spirit. The gift of Spiritual Discernment does not typically fit into "office" positions. However, within the context of church ministry, this gift is a valuable asset to the following ministry functions.

• Restoration & Recovery Ministries. Restoration and recovery ministries often address serious spiritual strongholds and spiritual bondage issues that have dominated a person's life for many years. The ability to discern between habitual or chemical dependency problems and spiritual problems is an important distinction.

• Instructional Accountability Ministry. Is what is taught truly of the Lord and confirmed by Scripture? Spiritual Discernment is often needed to ensure the health and welfare of the entire ministry body. In the Matthew 4 narrative, it is very clear that Satan knows and quotes the Bible. Not every "good" word is a "godly" word. In Jeremiah 14:13-14, the prophet Jeremiah was commissioned by God to deliver a tough message of discipline to God's people, yet many other "prophets" were expounding a future of peace and prosperity. 1 Timothy 4:1-2 tells us that in the "later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons. Such teachings come through hypocritical liars, whose consciences have been seared as with a hot iron." Again, in 2 Timothy 4:3-4, Paul instructs Timothy that "the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths." To properly use the gift of Spiritual Discernment within the context of "Instructional Accountability," the person with this gift should ensure that they know their Biblical doctrine well, and test all judgments by the Word of God.

• Front Line Evangelism Ministry. It is at the front lines of any warfare that the real battles take place. This is true of spiritual warfare as well. The ministry of evangelism seeks to take back people who knowingly or unknowingly serve the Evil One, and help them become followers of Jesus Christ. The Apostle Paul tells us in 2 Corinthians 10:4-5 that "the weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God " Often, it is not so black and white whether a particular person is a Christian or not. They may go to church ... maybe having done so their whole life. They may say the right words, or act the right way. But this does not make a person right with God. Only true faith in the work of Jesus Christ, evidenced by the sanctifying and gifting work of the Holy Spirit, enables a person to be "in-Christ." Discernment can provide clarity regarding a person's spiritual state as well as help identify their spiritual formation roadblocks. In Acts 8:18-23 Peter demonstrates Spiritual Discernment regarding the spiritual health of Simon the Sorcerer: that he was "full of bitterness and captive to sin."

 Counseling Ministry. Today, counseling ministries tend to take a holistic approach toward those they serve, seeking to minister to the mind, emotions and spirit. It is the "spirit" aspect of counseling where Spiritual Discernment can be of great value. The spiritual state of people can have a great impact upon their emotional and mental wellbeing. However, just having the gift of Spiritual Discernment does not qualify one to be a counselor of others. Additional gifts and professional training, are generally required before a person is qualified to be a counselor. However, the gift of Spiritual Discernment can help a counselor identify a person's spiritual condition.

People with this gift:

- distinguish truth from error, good from evil, pure motives from impure.
- identify deception in others with accuracy and appropriateness.
- determine whether a word attributed to God is authentic.
- identify the spiritual source of a word, attitude or action - whether it is from God, self, other human sources or Satan and the demonic.
- are able to sense the presence of evil.

Evidence:

- A. You have a clear sense of when people are telling the truth or telling a lie.
- B. Your spirit is sensitive to the things of God.
- C. You can spot insincerity quickly and easily.
- D. You have a close and committed relationship with God.
- E. You tend to be perceptive and insightful.



Cautions:

a. Possessing a spiritually superior attitude.b. Spotting a "demon" behind every bush.c. Becoming skeptical about people.

Scriptures: 1 Corinthians 12:7-11, 1 John 4:1-6, 1 Corinthians 2:9-16, 2 Chronicles 2:12, Psalms 119:125, Proverbs 3:21, 1 Kings 3:9, Hebrews 5:14

Communication Gifts:

Communication gifts are divine empowerments that serve people by enabling them to understand God's greatness in a way that draws them toward Him.

23. Teaching

The gift of Teaching is the Spirit-empowered ability to understand, clearly explain and apply God's word, will, and principles, causing greater Christlikeness in the lives and ministries of the listeners.

The Purpose: To strengthen the faith of the Body of Christ and help equip the Body for mature Christian living and effective Spirit-empowered ministry.

It is the divine enablement to understand, clearly explain and apply the word of God so that those taught understand and learn. It includes instructing others in the Bible in a logical and systematic way so as to communicate pertinent information for true understanding and growth. A true teacher functioning in this gift will make you hungry for more.

The gift of Teaching is a highly honored Spiritual Gift within the assembly of Christ Followers, but it is also a gift with severe responsibilities before God. The Bible warns us that those who teach among the people will be judged more harshly by God (James 3:1). A spiritually healthy teacher will

not simply instruct the minds and hearts of his/ her students, but will first instruct and apply to himself/herself the lessons taught by God through Scripture and experiences with God and the Holy Spirit, and then only after the teacher can model the Biblical lesson within his/her life, will he/she be authentically able to teach the lesson to others. 1 Corinthians 12:28 lists the gift of Teaching, when applied within the church, as an essential office within the ministry ... second only to the greater offices of Prophets and Apostles. Ephesians 4:11-14 makes it clear that the teacher's job description includes "Equipping the people for the works of service." Paul specifically lists Teaching as one of the Spiritual Gifts in Romans 12:7.

Based upon your personality style and passions, you may prefer to apply your gift of Teaching in one or more of the following ways:

• Pastoral Preaching. Teaching Pastors prefer to study and expound the Word of God for others within the Body. 2 Timothy 4:2-3 instructs Timothy, a Teaching Pastor, "Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage – with great patience and careful instruction. For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine...." 1 Corinthians 4:6b instructs Pastoral Teachers, "Do not go beyond what is written." James 3:1 states as a warning to those who would presume to be a teacher within the Church: "Not many of you should presume to be teachers, my brothers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly."

• Large Group Corporate Instruction. People with this gift resonate with the following statement: I believe God would prefer for me to use the teaching gifts He has given to me within a large group or congregational setting. • Classroom Instruction. People with this gift resonate with the following statement: I believe God would prefer for me to use the teaching gifts He has given me within an adult classroom context.

• eLearning Instruction. People with this gift resonate with the following statement: I believe God would prefer for me to use the teaching gifts He has given me developing online training programs, and providing online instruction and mentorship.

• Small Group Instruction. People with this gift resonate with the following statement: I believe God would prefer for me to use the teaching gifts He has given me within a small group context of fewer than twelve people.

• Children's Ministries Instructor. People with this gift resonate with the following statement: I believe God would prefer for me to use the teaching gifts He has given me within an elementary Biblical education context.

• Student Ministries Instructor. People with this gift resonate with the following statement: I believe God would prefer for me to use the teaching gifts He has given me within a middle school, or high school or university context.

• One-On-One Instruction. People with this gift resonate with the following statement: I believe God would prefer for me to use the teaching gifts He has given me within close interpersonal discipling relationships.

People with this gift:

- communicate Biblical truth that inspires greater obedience to the word.
- challenge listeners simply and practically with the truths of Scripture.
- focus on changing lives by helping others understand the Bible and God's ways better.
- give attention to detail and accuracy.
- prepare through extended times of study and reflection.

Evidence:

- A. You have a gift for public speaking.
- B. You can study and organize your thoughts in a clear and concise manner.
- C. People enjoy your teaching and want more.
- D. You are disciplined and articulate.
- E. You communicate Biblical truth that inspires greater obedience to the word.
- F. You present the whole counsel of God for maximum life change.
- G. You challenge listeners simply and practically with the truths of Scripture.

Cautions:

- a. Getting "lost in the details" of study and getting sidetracked from the ultimate purpose of the study.
- b. Placing too much emphasis on the "glory" of being up front before people.
- c. Teaching information without application.

Scriptures: Ephesians 4:11-16, Romans 12:6-8, 1 Corinthians 12:28-31, Hebrews 5:12-14, Acts 18:24-28, 2 Timothy 2:2

24. Evangelism/Evangelist

The gift of Evangelism is the distinctive ability to share the good news of Jesus Christ effectively so that people respond to the promises of Christ through conversion to Christianity and movement towards discipleship.

The Purpose: To actively initiate and develop relationships with the lost in order to share the salvation message and lead them to repentance from sin and eternal life in Christ.

While Evangelism may be the responsibility of all Christ Followers, people with the gift of Evangelism display exceptional boldness and effectiveness at sharing their faith. People with the gift of Evangelism often share their faith as a natural part of any conversation. Similarly, Evangelists may even find it natural to share their faith with complete strangers. Evangelists can usually list the specific names of people whom they have personally led to faith in Christ.

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Appendix F: Spiritual Gifts Definitions

Ephesians 4:11-13 lists Evangelist not only as a Spiritual Gift, but also as an important role within the Church. In this passage, the Apostle Paul stresses that God has ordained the Evangelist to "prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ."

The Evangelist shares this God-ordained commission with Apostles, Prophets, Pastors and Teachers. But it is the work of the Evangelist that enables those in these other ministry roles to fulfill their ministry calling, for unless a person first comes to know Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior it is pointless to consider how they will "become mature" in Christ.

In today's ministries, Evangelism is generally utilized in two ways: 1) Programmed Evangelism and 2) Personal Evangelism.

 Programmed Evangelism. Programmed evangelism centers around "Seeker Events." Seeker events may include Sunday Seeker Services, Evangelism Crusades, or Alpha-type Evangelistic programs. Programmed Evangelism utilizes the gifts and abilities of many people to accomplish the work of communicating and relating the Gospel message. The Evangelist who prefers Programmed Evangelism will likely be highly creative or, in contrast, have strong administrative skills. They may also be "big picture" people who seek many conversions to Christ, and so do not have the patience for one-on-one evangelism as their primary ministry methodology. In Acts 17:16-34, the Apostle Paul used "Programmed Evangelism" when he entered the meeting of the Areopagus in which the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers debated new ideas every day. Paul introduced a new idea for discussion ... the "Unknown God who raises the dead to life." The result was that a few influential philosophers believed in Jesus Christ.

 Personal Evangelism. If God has given you a highly relational personality, you will likely prefer Personal Evangelism over Programmed Evangelism. This type of Evangelist can be found wherever people gather. They seek to build authentic relationships, and, through the trust established in those relationships, to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ one-on-one. This type of Evangelist is thrilled when they are able to personally pray with an individual to accept Christ. In a similar fashion, they grow to care deeply about the spiritual welfare of the people God has brought within their life, and may spend considerable time praying for the salvation of those who do not currently know the Lord. The Personal Evangelist will resonate with the passion of the Apostle Paul in 2 Corinthians 5:18-20.

People with this gift:

- communicate the message of Christ with clarity and conviction.
- seek out opportunities to talk to unbelievers about spiritual matters.
- challenge unbelievers to faith and to become fully devoted followers of Christ.
- adapt their presentation of the gospel to connect with the individual's needs.
- seek opportunities to build relationships with unbelievers.

Evidence:

- A. You have a passion and confidence about sharing your faith.
- B. You eagerly develop authentic relationships with the lost with the hope of witnessing to them about Jesus.
- C. You have a strong grasp of Scripture (especially the gospel story and where key truths are found).
- D. People are drawn toward Christ through you.
- E. You tend to be candid and direct.
- F. You adapt your presentation of the Gospel to connect with the individual's needs.

Cautions:

- a. Looking down on those who do not have the gift of Evangelism.
- b. Pressuring people to receive Christ who are not ready.
- c. Losing sight of the fact that the primary focus is to share the gospel in obedience to the prompting of the Holy Spirit, not "win a convert."

Scriptures: Ephesians 4:11-16, Matthew 28:16-20, Acts 2:36-40, Acts 8:5-6, Acts 14:21, Acts 8:26-40, 2 Timothy 4:5, Acts 21:8, Luke 19:1-10

25. Music/Worship Leader

The gift of Music/Worship Leader is the special gift whereby the Spirit enables certain Christians to praise God through music in such a way as to enhance the worship experience of other believers and draw them into the presence of God.

The Purpose: To bring glory and praise to God through song and instruments.

It gives the believer the desire and capability to express personal faith and provide inspiration and comfort through the playing of a musical instrument, singing, or dancing. The spiritual aspect of the gift is revealed as the gift bearer gives witness to love and praise for the Lord, and thus glorifies God. Those listening or watching become inspired to feel the presence and majesty of God when music or song uplifts their soul in a manner that brings them closer to their Lord. It is the gift that gives a believer the capability to present personal witness and inspiration to others through instrumental music, singing or dancing. The gift of Worship enables a person to lead others to seek the heart of God. All Christ Followers are called of God to worship Him. However, people possessing the gift of Worship and Musical Expression seem to know how to guide the emotions and spirits of others to forget their surroundings and circumstances, and focus upon the greatness of God. It gives the believer the desire and capability to express personal faith and provide inspiration and comfort through the playing of a musical instrument, singing, or leading people in worship.

The spiritual aspect of the gift is revealed as the gift bearer gives witness to love and praise for the Lord, and thus glorifies God. Those being led become inspired to feel the presence and majesty of God when music, song, or dance uplifts their soul in a manner that brings them closer to their Lord.

Within Old Testament temple worship there was a category of Levites called Door Keepers. Door Keepers were responsible for the various entrances within the temple. However, among the Door Keepers was a large number of Levites who were gifted in Worship and Musical Expression. Their job was to serve outside the main entrance to the temple as a giant worship team. They were commissioned to play and sing songs of praise and thanksgiving. And so we find Psalm 100:4 exclaiming: "Enter His gates with thanksgiving in your hearts, enter His courts with praise." There were over 4,000 worship team members who served in rotation, providing songs of praise and thanksgiving from sunrise to sunset. This large worship team was led by a person with the title of "Chief Musician." We find that many of the Psalms were written by or for the Chief Musician 1 Chronicles 25:1, 6-8; 2 Chronicles 5:12-14; 2 Chronicles 29:25-30). Jesus proclaimed in John 4:23 and 24 that "a time is coming and has now come when true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks." Paul further instructs the Church: "Let the word of God dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God" (Colossians 3:16).

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People with this gift:

- sing or play a musical instrument quite well, and enjoy it.
- have special joy singing praises to God, either alone or with other people.
- feel secure in the fact that their musical ability will be of benefit to other people with whom they come in contact.
- can use their musical ability to help and inspire others to worship God.
- see that their singing or instrument playing is a spiritual encouragement for others.

Evidence:

- A. You have a passion for worship and praise that exalts God.
- B. People often ask you to sing or play a musical instrument to help people worship.
- C. People often say to you that the expression of your gift helps them draw close to God during worship.

Cautions:

- a. Difficulty in distinguishing between a human talent for music and the Spiritual Gift of Music.
- b. Seeking the attention and praise that often accompanies singing or playing a musical instrument.
- c. Allowing the gift to bring your responsibilities beyond your level of maturity and character development.

Scriptures: 1 Samuel 16:14-23, 1 Corinthians 14:26, Psalm 33:1-3, Psalm 96:1-2, Psalm 100:1-2, Psalm 149:3, Psalm 150:1-6, Colossians 3:16, 2 Chronicles 5:12-13, 2 Samuel 6:14-15, 1 Chronicles 16:41-42

26. Tongues

The gift of Tongues is the distinctive ability to speak in a language which you never learned and communicate a divinely anointed message from God whether in a private prayer language or in a group setting. *The Purpose:* To encourage and instruct people towards the extension of the local church and the expansion of the Kingdom.

The gift of Tongues has three purposes within the assembly of Christ Followers: 1) to be used during periods of prayer, allowing the Holy Spirit to pray through the Christ Follower when he/she does not know how to pray, in order to edify the believer (Romans 6:26, 27 and 1 Corinthians 14:4); 2) to receive divine messages from God for the benefit of the assembly of Christ Followers, understanding that someone with the gift of Interpretation of Tongues must be present to interpret (1 Corinthians 12:10, 28 and 1 Corinthians 14:13-19); 3) to enable a person to speak an unlearned language for the purposes of evangelism (Acts 2:1-13). In all these formats, the Holy Spirit may choose to use the "tongues of men or angels" (1 Corinthians 13:1) to communicate God's love.

Based upon your personality and gift mix, God may use your gift of Tongues in any of the following ways.

- Prayer Language. People with this gift resonate with the following statement: I believe God has called me to a ministry of prayer, and so has given me the gift of Tongues to aid me in my prayer ministry.
- Deliver Divine Messages to the Church. People with this gift resonate with the following statement. I believe God has called me to communicate messages to the Body of Christ and has given me the gift of Tongues as the means by which God has chosen to speak through me.
- Deliver the Gospel to Unlearned Language Groups. People with this gift resonate with the following statement: I believe God has called me to cross-cultural ministry, and has given me the gift of Tongues to empower me to communicate the Gospel to different language groups. This seems

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to be true whether I have studied and learned the language or God speaks through me in an unlearned language.

If a tongue is spoken without an interpretation, the speaker is edified. If the tongue is interpreted, it is for the edification of the Body as well as the speaker.

People with this gift:

- speak in a language they have never learned and do not understand.
- worship the Lord with unknown words too deep for the mind to comprehend.
- experience an intimacy with God which inspires them to serve and edify others.
- speak in tongues as a private prayer language.
- convey messages from God in a group setting (an interpretation must take place, or else the one speaking the tongue should remain silent.)

Evidence:

- A. You may receive a spontaneous message from God which is made known to His Body through the gift of Interpretation.
- B. You may be called to cross-cultural ministry, and be given the gift of Tongues so that you can communicate the Gospel to unlearned language groups.
- C. You speak to God in a private prayer language, where you may sense His presence in a powerful way.

Cautions:

- a. Viewing it as sole, essential or initial evidence of being filled with the Spirit.
- b. Insisting that everyone speak in tongues.
- c. Bringing confusion or division into the Body of Christ.
- d. Developing a spiritually superior attitude.

The bottom line is that the gift of Tongues must build up the Body of Christ or it is not a gift of the Spirit! In Corinth, where it was divisive, Paul considered it a Spiritual Gift, but insisted it be used with love. *Scriptures:* 1 Corinthians 12:7-11, 1 Corinthians 12:28-31, 1 Corinthians 14:1-40, Acts 2:1-12, Acts 10:44-46, Acts 19:1-7, Mark 16:17, Romans 8:26-27, 1 Corinthians 13:1

27. Interpretation of Tongues

The gift of Interpretation of Tongues is the distinctive ability to understand someone who is speaking in Tongues and provide the meaning of its message in order to instruct and encourage the people who are hearing it and those to whom it was sent.

The Purpose: To give the meaning of a message in tongues spoken out loud in community for the extension of the local church and the expansion of the Kingdom. The Bible makes it clear that the use of Tongues within a corporate gathering of Christ Followers should be accompanied by the gift of Interpretation of Tongues so that the whole Body may benefit (1 Corinthians 14:5, 26-28). In 1 Corinthians 12:10, the Apostle Paul lists Interpretation of Tongues among the many available gifts. In verse 30 of this same chapter, Paul makes it clear that this gift is not available to everyone. When a person with the gift of Tongues, in partnership with a person with the gift of Interpretation of Tongues, ministers to a gathering of Christ Followers, their joint ministries serve in much the same fashion as the gift of Prophecy. If a tongue is spoken without an interpretation, the speaker is edified. If the tongue is interpreted, it is for the edification of the Body.

People with this gift:

- express with an interpretation a word by the Spirit which edifies the Body

- enable the gift of Tongues to build up the church by interpreting God's message for the people.

Evidence:

A. You have interpreted a language unknown to you and the hearers, and people were instructed and/ or encouraged in their faith.

Cautions:

- a. Insisting that your interpretation of someone speaking in tongues is authoritative, without allowing it to be tested by the Scriptures or others who hear from God by the Spirit.
- b. Bringing confusion or division into the Body of Christ.
- c. Developing a spiritually superior attitude.

Scriptures: 1 Corinthians 12:7-11, 1 Corinthians 12:28-31, 1 Corinthians 14:1-40

28. Creative Communication

The gift of Creative Communication is the divine enablement to communicate truth through a variety of art forms in a way that moves people towards God.

The Purpose: To use the arts in order to glorify God and edify others.

It is the gift that gives the believer the skill to create artistic expressions that produce a spiritual response of strength and inspiration. It is in God's nature to be creative. Therefore, when the Holy Spirit imparts personality and Spiritual Gifts to God's people, it should not be a surprise to anyone that God would also impart this divine attribute. Ephesians 2:10 tells us that "...we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do." While this passage applies to all Christ Followers, it clearly refers to God as a "creative workman." This passage also suggests that when God equips a person to be creative, it is because He desires that creative person to use those abilities to accomplish specific ordained purposes. Colossians 1:15 and 16 affirm that God created all things ... and that all things were created "for" Him. The first time in Scripture where someone is spoken of as being "filled with the Spirit" has to do with the arts and creativity (Exodus 31:3).

The gift of Creative Communication, when used within the Church, can be shaped by the personality of the person who possesses the gift. As a result, people with the gift of Creative Communication tend to fall into the following preferred roles.

 Oral Communication Arts are more and more necessary in our communication skills. Within a ministry context, creative oral gifts can be utilized in various public speaking roles. Such roles might include preaching and teaching, but may also include large-group leadership of children's or student ministries. With today's emerging technology, oral communication skills are also required for "on-air" and "on-line" radio and television broadcasts. Other often overlooked roles may include comedy, master of ceremonies, and ministry tour guides.

• Written Communication Arts are the special God-given ability to formulate thoughts and ideas into meaningful written forms so that the reader will find courage, guidance, knowledge, or edification through the words shared with them. This includes the development of song lyrics and poetry, script writing, newsletters, and content authoring for websites and reading materials. With the emergence of e-learning within the Church, people with creative communication gifts will now be in even greater demand. The Bible was written by people with this gift.

• Graphic Arts (computer-based) have become a necessity for the contemporary and postmodern ministry. Graphic arts are utilized in multi-media video (Macromedia Flash and PowerPoint) as well as static brochure and website design. If a picture is worth a thousand words, then it is no wonder that ministries are seeking to communicate more effectively through the integration of graphic arts into their ministries.

• Performing Arts are creative expressions that bring to life the issues and emotions of our everyday reality. The use of drama and/or dance

within a worship service can help attendees detach from their present context and connect to the topic or theme being addressed within the service program. The Performing Artist is uniquely able to help the service participants connect with the characters of the dance or drama ... to see themselves in those characters, or to see in the characters how they would like to be. Performing Artists are most effective when they hold a mirror up to us and enable us to remove the mask from our own lives and truly see who we are and who God wants us to be.

• Technical Arts are crucial to the contemporary and postmodern ministry. Sound, lighting, multimedia, computer technology, software, networking and internet-based ministry are all areas that require this non-traditional creative artist. With the advent of the internet and e-Church ministry, the Technical Artists will find more and more opportunities to unleash their skills and creativity.

• Visual Arts involve an "eye" for presentation. The Visual Artist may be an interior decorator, floral arranger, stage and set designer, lighting director, etc. They may excel at drawing, painting or photography. Our present culture acquires information through the eyes much more effectively than through the ears. The Visual Artist is uniquely gifted to help pastoral teachers communicate more effectively by integrating the visual arts into their messages and programs. This includes people gifted of God to create movies that inspire, instruct and move people toward God!

People with this gift:

- use the arts to communicate God's truth.
- develop and use artistic skills such as drama, writing, art, music, dance, etc.
- use variety and creativity to captivate people and cause them to consider Christ's message.
- challenge people's perspective of God through various forms of the arts.
- demonstrate fresh ways to express the Lord's ministry and message.

- may write stories, sermons, devotions, histories, prayers, songs, or poetry to be used to build up the Body of Christ.
- may teach God's word to others through what they write.
- may be better at expressing their thoughts in written form than in verbal form.

Evidence:

- A. Use the arts to communicate God's truth.
- B. Develop and use artistic skills such as drama, writing, art, dance, music, etc.
- C. Use variety and creativity to captivate people and cause them to consider Christ's message.
- D. Challenge people's perspective of God through various forms of the arts.
- E. Demonstrate fresh ways to express the Lord's ministry and message.

Cautions:

- a. Need to remember that art is not for art's sake, but it's to glorify God and edify others.
- b. Could find evaluation and constructive criticism difficult to accept.
- c. Might be uncooperative (because of ego, pride, or individualism) and need to work at being a team player.

Scriptures: Luke 1:1-3, 1 John 2:1,

1 John 2:12-14, 1 Timothy 3:14-15, Jude 1:3, Psalm 150, 2 Samuel 6:14-15, Mark 4:2, 33

Authority Gifts:

Authority gifts are divine empowerments that serve people by enabling them to be influenced by God's loving leadership advancing His Kingdom.

29. Leadership

The gift of Leadership is the special ability God gives to some to set goals in accordance with God's purpose and to communicate these goals to others in such a way that they voluntarily and harmoniously work together to accomplish these goals for the glory of God.

The Purpose: To direct and enhance the efforts of others in a positive way so that the Kingdom of God is advanced.

It is the distinctive ability to influence others according to a "Big Picture" purpose, mission, or plan. It is the divine enablement to cast vision, motivate, and direct people to harmoniously accomplish the purposes of God.

The Biblical image used when describing leadership is "shepherd." A Shepherd does not force his will upon the sheep; rather he tends and cares for them. The sheep instinctively follow a good shepherd. Jesus describes himself as the "Good Shepherd," and calls Church leaders his "Under-Shepherds." The Under-Shepherds must faithfully follow the example of the Good Shepherd and lay their lives down for the welfare of the sheep (John 10:14-18). The person gifted by God with Leadership abilities, will display the same servant leadership principles evidenced by Jesus and the Apostles. Leaders within God's Church are held to a higher standard before God. Hebrews 13:7-17 states, "Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith.... Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account...." In 1 Timothy 5:20, the Apostle Paul stresses that "(Leaders) who sin are to be rebuked publicly, so that others may take warning."

Depending upon your personality style, you will likely prefer to utilize your leadership gifts in one of the following ways: (This material influenced by the Teal Trust Styles)

• Pioneering Leadership. Pioneering Leaders are willing to push themselves and take appropriate risks, striving to discover and reach long-term goals: "forgetting what is behind, and straining for what lies ahead" (Philippians 3:12). Pioneering leaders are passionate and are wholly committed to a vision. Paul is a great example of a leader who was focused on pushing out the boundaries of the church, despite the personal risk. Pioneering leaders are at their strongest in the early stages of a vision or project, excited by seeking out where God is calling. However, as time passes they may lose interest in the implementation of a vision, eager to be looking ahead to the next challenge.

• Strategic Leadership. Leaders who can break down visions and large aims into manageable chunks are vital for the church. Strategic leaders have the insight and focus to work out ways of achieving the vision (the "how") and are able to persuade the rest of the church to accept this plan. When Nehemiah led the Jews in rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem, he demonstrated great strategic leadership in delegating the work. The result was that the walls were rebuilt in 52 days. Strategic leaders can bring common sense to difficult tasks. They are able to help people see how the seemingly impossible can be achieved. However, like pioneers, they can be less engaged with the implementation of a task, preferring to leave this to others.

 Management/Administration. All churches require good stewards and managers, people with gifts of administration (Acts 6). Any vision or change requires people who are able to plan, problem solve, delegate and organize. Without this gift, the best plans may not get implemented! The apostles delegated the practical tasks of sharing food and taking care of the widows to those gifted with the necessary skills, including Stephen and Philip. Managers are often underappreciated, having a leadership style which is less "up-front" than some of the other styles. However, much of the work simply would not get done without them. They are able to organize and follow through on all the necessary tasks and activities to ensure that projects are completed on time. They may struggle to relate to the visionary pioneers - dreaming and re-dreaming of achieving the impossible is not their tendency, but rather implementation of the current vision!

• Team Leadership. Team Leaders influence groups, whether having a formal leadership role in the group or not. For the church as 'the body' (1 Corinthians 12), working together is clearly important. The key strengths of team leaders are a desire to work with others and an ability to trust them. Team Leaders need great humility and servanthood - their sole aim is that the team achieves its goals. What they as individuals achieve is secondary. The greatest contribution Barnabas made to the church was probably training and equipping Paul so that he could go on to achieve greater things. Team Leaders are invaluable. If the church is truly to function as a Body, Team Leaders are needed to ensure harmony and effectiveness in the way the team works.

• Pastoral Leadership. Many church leaders feel they ought to be Pastoral leaders, although many don't have this as their primary style. This is not a problem! Pastoral leaders are real "people-people," who have an important role in supporting the pioneers, strategists, team leaders and the rest of the church, particularly when times are hard. Vision and moving into vision seem less important to pastoral leaders. Peter was a pastoral leader, a complete contrast to Paul's energetic church planting and exhortation. Pastoral leadership is often unseen, and often unappreciated publicly, yet hugely important. Those who are pastoral leaders can sometimes be threatened by the pioneers and strategists and at times are irritated by the attention to detail shown by the managers. Yet their contribution to a team is invaluable as they usually command huge respect and support for their care-giving role.

• Encouraging Leadership. Paul was a great encourager - his letters to the early churches contained exhortation and encouragement as well as teaching. Encouraging leaders are able to motivate whole churches, teams and individuals. They have

great discernment into people's gifts, their feelings and what motivates them, and are able to release them into fulfilling their ministries. Encouraging leaders have the knack of knowing when a quiet word can spur people on, when to challenge and when to support, when to coach and when to give space. Occasionally they may irritate people by appearing less "involved" than other leadership styles - sometimes people want more than just encouragement.

People with this gift:

- provide direction for God's people or ministry.
- motivate others to perform to the best of their abilities.
- present the "big picture" for others to see.
- model the values of the ministry.
- take responsibility and establish goals.

Evidence:

- A. You seem to have a significant amount of influence on other people.
- B. You are offered opportunities to serve in leadership capacities.
- C. You see the big picture easily and clearly.
- D. Decision-making comes naturally to you, and others desire your opinion.
- E. You possess a strong desire to "change the world" and make a positive difference.
- F. You are not afraid to take a risk.
- G. You speak with confidence and conviction.

Cautions:

- a. A prideful attitude and a tendency to look down on others who are not leaders.
- b. Misusing power.
- c. Using people to accomplish personal goals and objectives.
- d. Not appreciating people with "helping" gifts.
- e. Not appreciating the need to provide a spiritual covering!

Scriptures: Nehemiah 2:11-18, Romans 12:6-8, Hebrews 13:7



30. Apostleship/New Ministry Developer

The gift of Apostleship is the distinctive ability to start churches and ministry structures coupled with the authority to exercise general leadership or oversight over a number of churches and/or ministries, which is readily recognized and results in tangible fruit in ministry.

The Purpose: To strategically and spiritually lead, equip and organize others for the specific mission of extending the Kingdom of God through establishing ministries and churches.

This is an entrepreneurial gift that enables people to develop new ministries, churches or mission fields. In the strict sense this gift was confined to the twelve apostles. The New Testament does, however, give this title to a number of others (e.g. Romans 16:7 and Acts 14:14). New Ministry Developers are risk-takers for the Kingdom of God. They are always seeking new territories in which to start outreach ministries and are on the forefront of new ministry development within the established local church. This gift of God causes the Christ Follower to be dissatisfied with the status quo within church ministry. They are always seeking a new and better way to accomplish the work of the Great Commission and spiritual formation. Seeing both the evangelism and discipleship sides of the Great Commission, they are truly Big Picture thinkers.

The Apostle Paul was definitely called by God to be a new ministry developer. He describes his ministry role in 1 Corinthians 3:10: "By the grace God has given me, I laid a foundation as an expert builder, and someone else is building on it. But each one should be careful how he builds." In Romans 15:20 Paul asserts: "It has always been my ambition to preach the gospel where Christ was not known, so that I would not be building on someone else's foundation." The gift of Apostleship/New Ministry Developer is often accompanied by gifts of leadership, faith, administration and wisdom. The gift of Apostleship functions best in community with others similarly gifted and called by God to establish foundations for Kingdom building. These apostolic teams are essential for health, accountability and reproduction.

Depending upon your personality style, gift mix and passions, you may prefer one of the following applications of your gift of Apostleship/New Ministry Developer.

• Church Planter. A Church Planter seeks to develop new outreach church ministries in regions where such a ministry is lacking. Church Planters are typically sensitive to regional demographics, growth trends and church-per-capita statistics. They are passionate about evangelism and reaching the unreached by extending ministry into new territories and styles. They understand the need for "new wine skins" that can lead people to Christ and grow them to full maturity. They desire to extend the Kingdom of God by creating new manifestations of contagious Christian community.

• Cross-Cultural Missionary. Cross-Cultural Missions do not necessarily imply overseas ministry, although this is the classic ministry role. In today's cultural melting-pot, Cross-Cultural Missions may mean extending an outreach ministry to a different community across town. Cross Cultural Missionaries are sensitive to cultural distinctives as well as the value of cultural diversity. They are typically passionate about living out the ministry ideal of "the unity of the Body of Christ." Cross Cultural Missionaries are also typically passionate about the work of Evangelism. • New e-Church Ministries. E-Church ministry is still a new and developing ministry medium. Attempting to define e-Church ministry is difficult at best. However, proponents of e-Church ministry tend to value freedom of expression and safe spiritual exploration. They tend to be passionate about the work of evangelism as well as mentoring people in their spiritual formation journey. They also tend to value cultural diversity. Proponents of e-Church ministry are also technically astute.

• New Campus Ministries. There is always room for new campus-based ministries within an established church. People called and equipped by God to develop new campus-based ministries tend to be sensitive to groups of people who are "slipping through the cracks" of the ministry, as well as those to whom the ministry is not yet properly positioned to serve. New Campus Ministry Developers typically desire to take their local church to the "next level" in its ministry development. They are dissatisfied with the status quo and desire to see the impact of a vibrant church expand into their neighborhood.

• New Community Impact Ministries.

New Community Impact Ministry developers are typically passionate about social justice and social impact within their community, in the name of Christ. City missions, food pantries and shelters are classic examples of Community Impact Ministries. Contemporary examples include Computer Training Centers, Vocational Training, Random Acts of Kindness, After-school Care Centers, etc.

People with this gift:

- pioneer and establish new ministries or churches.
- adapt to different surroundings by being culturally sensitive and aware.
- desire to minister to unreached people in other communities or countries.
- often mature to having responsibility to oversee ministries or groups of churches.

- are experts at laying kingdom foundations for others to build upon that bear fruit.
- understand reproductive disciple-making and are always mentoring leaders.

Evidence:

- A. You demonstrate authority and vision for the mission of the church.
- B. You have an unusual anointing on your leadership to initiate and lay foundations.
- C. You are sought out as a mentor by growing and future church and ministry leaders.
- D. You possess a desire to pioneer and establish new ministries and churches.
- E. The Body of Christ has and continues to affirm you in or toward a leadership role.
- F. You understand the healthy functioning of the Kingdom of God and adapt the forms of ministry to meet the function.

Cautions:

- a. Misusing the authority granted to you.
- b. Following your own agenda rather than God's.
- c. Operating outside of an accountable ministry team.

Scriptures: 1 Corinthians 12:28, Ephesians 4:11-12, Romans 1:5, Acts 15:1-3

31. Missionary

The gift of Missionary is the distinctive ability to minister whatever other Spiritual Gifts you have effectively in cultures beyond your own.

The Purpose: To advance the great commission by extending the local church on a worldwide basis.

Those with this gift find it easy or exciting to adjust to a different culture or community. Missionaries find great joy working with minorities, people of other countries, or those with other distinct cultural differences. Those with this gift have a stronger-thanaverage desire to be a part of the fulfillment of the Great Commission around the world.

Appendix F: Spiritual Gifts Definitions

People with this gift:

- have an intense spirit of unease at the thought of all the unsaved people in the world.
- adapt themselves and core Biblical principles to different surroundings by being culturally sensitive and aware.
- have the ability to reach out to people groups of a different ethnicity, language, or cultural background.
- can establish meaningful relationships with people of other nationalities or cultures.
- desire to minister to unreached people in other communities or countries.

Evidence:

- A. You adapt well to other cultures.
- B. Learning foreign languages is easy for you.
- C. You are generally flexible by nature.
- D. You are committed to Evangelism.
- E. You desire to minister to unreached people in other communities or countries.
- F. You adapt to different surroundings by being culturally sensitive and aware.

Cautions:

- a. Getting caught up in the "glamour" of world travel and the status some churches give to missionaries.
- b. Approaching foreign missions work as an escape from lack of fruit in the local church.
- c. Placing foreign missions as a higher priority than the other efforts of the local church.

Scriptures: Ephesians 3:6-8, Mark 16:15, Acts 1:8, Acts 13:2-5, Acts 22:21, Romans 10:14-15, 1 Corinthians 9:19-23, Acts 8:4

32. Pastor/Shepherd

The gift of Pastor/Shepherd is the distinctive ability to assume responsibility for the spiritual care, protection, guidance, and feeding (teaching and equipping) of a group of Christians.

The Purpose: To nurture a group of people in spiritual growth by providing spiritual direction, loving accountability and teaching by example with the goal of leading them to greater spiritual maturity and effective ministry.

The gift of Pastor is also an office of authority within the Church. A Pastor is gifted by God to develop long-term relationships with a group of Christ Followers, and assumes responsibility for their spiritual development and personal nurture. A Pastor guides, instructs, equips, encourages, exhorts and at times disciplines members of the assembly of Christ Followers.

Ephesians 4:11 and 12 make it clear that the Pastor is particularly called of God to equip lay people to utilize their Spiritual Gifts in personal ministry. When the gift of Pastor is publicly recognized, and a person with this gift is elevated into the office of Pastor, the "Pastor" is also considered by the Bible to be an "Overseer" or "Elder" of the local congregation. 1 Peter 5:1-11 and 1 Timothy 3:1-7 provide instructions regarding the selection, qualifications and operations of an Elder/Overseer.

People with the gift of Pastor will express that gift differently based upon their God-given personality and gift mix. You may find that you prefer one or more of the following expressions of the pastoral gift.

• Nurturing Pastor. Pastoral care often involves nurturing and caring for the nurturing needs within the Body. Typically, Nurturing Pastors prefer a one-on-one ministry. Visiting the sick, shut-ins, caring for a small group, or comforting those who suffer are all classic functions of a Nurturing Pastor. • Teaching Pastor. Teaching Pastors prefer to study the Word of God and expound it for others within the Body. 2 Timothy 4:2 and 3 instruct Timothy, a Teaching Pastor, "Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage – with great patience and careful instruction. For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine...." 1 Corinthians 4:6b instructs Pastoral Teachers: "Do not go beyond what is written." James 3:1 states a warning to those who would presume to be a teacher within the Church: "Not many of you should presume to be teachers, my brothers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly."

 Administrative Pastor. Most personality types that God generally calls into pastoral roles are peopleoriented and so are typically weak strategic planners and system administrators. However, there exists a category of people to whom God does grant the gift of "Pastor," who care for people, but are particularly called to focus their service upon the systems and structures of the ministry. They possess strong administrative and planning abilities, and so are able to help other pastoral-types be less reactive in their ministry. The Administrative Pastor's ability to proactively plan and create ministry systems will enable other pastoral ministry types to be more effective. These same qualities are essential in establishing a broad-based lay ministry within the Church. Administrative Pastors will seek to empower others and delegate responsibility.

• Evangelistic Pastor. An Evangelistic Pastor generally has the gift of Evangelism as well as Pastor. Evangelism Pastors are passionate about ministry to spiritual seekers. Typically, the "Pastoral" aspect of their gifts and personality causes them to prefer relational versus programmed approaches to the work of Evangelism.

• Discipleship Pastor. Discipleship Pastors are concerned about the spiritual formation and maturity of the people within their lives. They value working with people at every stage of spiritual development, from Seeker to Leader.

People with this gift:

- take responsibility to nurture the whole person in their walk with God.
- provide guidance and oversight to a group of God's people.
- model with their life what it means to be a fully devoted follower of Jesus.
- establish trust and confidence through long-term relationships.
- lead and protect those within their span of care.

Evidence:

- A. You possess a passion for personal spiritual growth and the spiritual growth of others around you.
- B. You have a vibrant walk with God.
- C. You are loyal and dedicated to your local church.
- D. You have the gift of Teaching and/or Exhortation.
- E. You are process-oriented and people are your focus.
- F. You establish trust and respect through long-term relationships.
- G. You lead and protect those within your span of care.

Cautions:

- a. Developing too strong a personal ownership of the people.
- b. Leading with your agenda, not God's.
- c. Allowing popularity to mean more to you than the people's spiritual growth.

Scriptures: John 10:1-16, Acts 20:28, Ephesians 4:11-15, 1 Timothy 3:1-7, 2 Timothy 4:1-2, 1 Timothy 4:11-16, 1 Peter 5:1-4

Appendix F: Spiritual Gifts Definitions

Spiritual Gifts Reference Material

We have intentionally included the widest variety of gifts and their definitions that we could support through Scripture and observable experience, so that everyone in the Body of Christ might be able to sense where they fit into God's Kingdom building efforts.

Biblical Summary about Spiritual Gifts

- 1. Every Christian has at least one Spiritual Gift (1 Peter 4:10)
- 2. No Christian has all the gifts (1 Corinthians 12:28-30)
- 3. We cannot choose our gifts; God does that job (1 Corinthians 12:7-11)
- 4. There is no gift that every Christian possesses (1 Corinthians 12:29-30)
- 5. Believers will account to the Lord for how they use their gifts (1 Peter 4:10)
- 6. Spiritual Gifts point to God's call and purpose for a Christian's life (Romans 12:2-8)
- 7. Gifts used without love do not accomplish God's intended purposes (1 Corinthians 13:1-3)
- 8. Spiritual Gifts are for the common good to build up the Body (1 Corinthians 12:27)

Biblical Guidelines for using Spiritual Gifts

- 1. Usage of the gift(s) should conform to Biblical teaching (2 Timothy 3:16; Romans 12:1 Corinthians 12-14; Ephesians 4:1 Peter 4).
- 2. There should be affirmation and positive feedback within the Body of Christ for the expression of the gift (1 Corinthians 12:7; Ephesians 4:16).
- 3. There should be agreement within the Body of Christ that the Holy Spirit is at work (1 John 4:1; 1 Thessalonians 5:21).
- 4. We should experience the peace of the Holy Spirit in our spirits as we offer our gift(s) to the Body of Christ (John 15:26; Romans 8:16).
- 5. There should be evidence of godly fruit in the life of the Body (John 15:8; Matthew 7:16-20).
- 6. Believers should offer their gifts for the common good as others have need (Acts 2:44-45; 1 Corinthians 12:7).
- 7. Unless gifts are offered in love, they have no worth (1 Corinthians 13:1-3).
- 8. We should strive to live a life worthy of our calling (Ephesians 4:1).

The main places in the Bible where we learn about Spiritual Gifts are:

- 1 Corinthians 12-14
- Romans 12
- Ephesians 4
- 1 Peter 4:7-11

From Scripture, we learn the following key information about Spiritual Gifts:

How Many Different Spiritual Gifts Are There?

There is little agreement among Christians as to exactly how many different Spiritual Gifts there are.

- Some people look at the key Bible passages on Spiritual Gifts and limit the gifts to the ones listed there:
 - Romans 12 Prophecy, Service, Teaching, Encouragement, Giving, Leadership, and Mercy
 - 1 Corinthians 12 Message of Wisdom, Message of Knowledge, Faith, Healing, Miraculous Powers, Prophecy, Distinguishing between Spirits, Speaking in Tongues, and Interpreting Tongues
 - Ephesians 4 Apostle, Prophet, Evangelist, Pastor, and Teacher
 - 1 Peter 4:7-11 Hospitality, Preaching, Service
- Some say that the Gifts of Administration and Leadership are the same gift.
- Some say the Gifts of Service, Helps and Mercy are the same gift.
- Some add the Gifts of Craftsmanship and Music because of the skills that God gave to people to help with worship in the Old Testament Tabernacle.
- Some see Craftsmanship as a vehicle to exercise the gift of Service.
- Some stick to the gifts listed in the New Testament.
- Some believe that certain Spiritual Gifts were given to people only by the direct laying on of hands of the original Apostles and that these gifts ceased to exist after the first century.
- Some add the possibility of other gifts in addition to those already mentioned:
 - 1 Corinthians 7:1-9 Celibacy
 - 1 Peter 4:9-10 Hospitality
 - 1 Corinthians 13:1-3 Martyrdom
 - Ephesians 3:6-8 Missionary
 - 1 Corinthians 13:1-3 Voluntary Poverty
 - Ephesians 6:18 Intercession/Prayer
 - Luke 1:1-3 Creative Communication
 - Mark 14:22-25 Community Builder
 - Luke 12:42-44 Stewardship
- Some see Prayer and Intercession as a vehicle through which the gifts of Faith, Healing and Miracles operate.

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Appendix G: The Promises of God and the 7 G's

The Promises of God

The promises of God in the Old Testament make up the true Christian hope. When on trial for his life, Paul spoke of the future reward for which he was prepared to lose all things. "And now it is because of my hope in what God has promised our fathers that I am on trial today. This is the promise our twelve tribes are hoping to see fulfilled as they earnestly serve God day and night. O king, it is because of this hope that the Jews are accusing me" (Acts 26:6,7). He had spent much of his life preaching "glad tidings (the Gospel), how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, God has fulfilled...in that he has raised up Jesus" (Acts 13:32,33). Paul explained that belief in those promises gave hope of resurrection from the dead (Acts 26:6-8, cf. 23:8), a knowledge of the second coming of Jesus in judgment and of the coming Kingdom of God (Acts 24:25; 28:20,31). It must be understood at the outset that the true Christian hope is "the hope of Israel." God sent His Son to save the Jews first and foremost (Galatians 4:4,5); yet God is not willing that any should perish. By His grace the Gentiles may share in the promise of salvation also.

"I observe that in using the promises regard is always to be had to the attributes of the promiser. His ability is infinite, and his willingness is also infinite – these things are always to be taken into account. Now if human beings promise us anything, in ever such strong language, we are at liberty to doubt whether we shall ever possess the things promised, having in view the capacity of the promiser. Thus you see we must interpret promises made to us in the light of the attributes of him who promises. It is very common for men in very strong language to promise that which we do not expect them to perform, and which indeed they cannot. Suppose a physician says that he will restore his patient to perfect health: it would be unfair to understand him to mean literally what he says. If the physician recovers the patient from the disease under which he is laboring, and restores him to comfortable health, it is all that can be expected of him. But whatever promise God makes he is perfectly able to perform it. We are always, therefore, to have respect for the attributes of him who makes the promise. If Christians would at once believe, and apply the promises, meet God on the ground that he has promised to meet them, they would find in their own experience how much value there is in prayer, and how powerfully they can prevail with God. They would find that there was a cheerfulness and willingness on God's part to meet them at every point. Many individuals plead the promises without fulfilling their conditions, and then they lose their faith in the promises, because they are not fulfilled in their experiences. The reason of this is because they have not fulfilled the required conditions. I have no doubt but it is a common thing for men to pray themselves out of all confidence in prayer, because they fail to fulfill the conditions on which God has promised them. How general is it that we find professors of religion have but very little confidence in prayer; and why is this? Because they have come to regard prayer as a duty, rather than as something that can prevail with God. Brethren, if you would enjoy communion with God, and prevail with him, you must look upon prayer as something more than a duty. You must take hold of prayer, as a sure instrument by which you can move God's hand, his arm, and his heart, and then you will do it. Amen." - Charles Finney

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Appendix G: The Promises of God and the 7 G's

The Promises of God and the 7 Values of Abundant Living

We have categorized the promises of God according to the 7 Values of Abundant Living. Use the Scriptures provided for you to guide your study and reflection time on the promises of God, as you more firmly root your attitudes in His promises. All Scriptures are taken from the New International Version.

Guidance - God Promises His Guidance to those who submit themselves to His Lordship and follow Him.

- Ecclesiastes 5:5 It is better not to vow than to make a vow and not fulfill it.
- Ecclesiastes 8:2 Obey the king's command, I say, because you took an oath before God.
- Isaiah 48:17 This is what the LORD says your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel: "I am the LORD your God, who teaches you what is best for you, who directs you in the way you should go.
- Psalm 85:8 I will listen to what God the LORD will say; he promises peace to his people, his saints – but let them not return to folly.
- Matthew 18:3 And he said: "I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven."
- Matthew 5:18 I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished.
- Psalm 76:11 Make vows to the LORD your God and fulfill them; let all the neighboring lands bring gifts to the One to be feared.
- Psalm 37:4-5 Delight yourself in the LORD and he will give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the LORD; trust in him and he will do this.

- John 3:36 Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on him.
- Psalm 32:8 I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you and watch over you.
- Jeremiah 29:13 You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.
- Jeremiah 33:3 Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know.
- Matthew 7:7-8 Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened.
- John 16:13 But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come.
- 2 Samuel 22:7 In my distress I called to the LORD; I called out to my God. From his temple he heard my voice; my cry came to his ears.
- Psalm 23 The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not be in want. He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, he restores my soul. He guides me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.
- Proverbs 3:5-6 Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.

For more resources, thoughts, and discussion about this session, please visit www.lifespringnetwork.org

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- Psalm 32:6-8 Therefore let everyone who is godly pray to you while you may be found; surely when the mighty waters rise, they will not reach him. You are my hiding place; you will protect me from trouble and surround me with songs of deliverance. Selah. I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you and watch over you.
- Isaiah 42:16 I will lead the blind by ways they have not known, along unfamiliar paths I will guide them; I will turn the darkness into light before them and make the rough places smooth. These are the things I will do; I will not forsake them.

Growth - God promises to train and transform earnest disciples of God's righteous life.

- Deuteronomy 6:13 These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts.
- Proverbs 16:7 When a man's ways are pleasing to the LORD, he makes even his enemies live at peace with him.
- Deuteronomy 30:6 The LORD your God will circumcise your hearts and the hearts of your descendants, so that you may love him with all your heart and with all your soul, and live.
- Deuteronomy 29:9 Carefully follow the terms of this covenant, so that you may prosper in everything you do.
- Matthew 11:28-29 Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.
- Psalm 25:8 Good and upright is the LORD; therefore he instructs sinners in his ways.
- Isaiah 51:22 This is what your Sovereign LORD says, your God, who defends his people: "See, I have taken out of your hand the cup that made you stagger; from that cup, the goblet of my wrath, you will never drink again.

- Joshua 1:8-9 Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful. Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go.
- 1 Samuel 16:7 But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The LORD does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart."
- 2 Samuel 22:25-29 The LORD has rewarded me according to my righteousness, according to my cleanness in his sight. "To the faithful you show yourself faithful, to the blameless you show yourself blameless, to the pure you show yourself pure, but to the crooked you show yourself shrewd. You save the humble, but your eyes are on the haughty to bring them low. You are my lamp, O LORD; the LORD turns my darkness into light.
- Psalm 27:14 Wait for the LORD; be strong and take heart and wait for the LORD.
- Psalm 5:12 For surely, O LORD, you bless the righteous; you surround them with your favor as with a shield.
- Psalm 18:30 As for God, his way is perfect; the word of the LORD is flawless. He is a shield for all who take refuge in him.
- Proverbs 9:10 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.

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- Isaiah 33:15-17 He who walks righteously and speaks what is right, who rejects gain from extortion and keeps his hand from accepting bribes, who stops his ears against plots of murder and shuts his eyes against contemplating evil--this is the man who will dwell on the heights, whose refuge will be the mountain fortress. His bread will be supplied, and water will not fail him. Your eyes will see the king in his beauty and view a land that stretches afar.
- Isaiah 55:6-9 Seek the LORD while he may be found; call on him while he is near. Let the wicked forsake his way and the evil man his thoughts. Let him turn to the LORD, and he will have mercy on him, and to our God, for he will freely pardon. "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," declares the LORD. "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts."
- Ezekiel 33:13 If I tell the righteous man that he will surely live, but then he trusts in his righteousness and does evil, none of the righteous things he has done will be remembered; he will die for the evil he has done.
- Psalm 119:34-36 Give me understanding, and I will keep your law and obey it with all my heart. Direct me in the path of your commands, for there I find delight. Turn my heart toward your statutes and not toward selfish gain.
- Matthew 5:20 For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven.
- Deuteronomy 23:23 Whatever your lips utter you must be sure to do, because you made your vow freely to the LORD your God with your own mouth.
- 2 Corinthians 7:1 Since we have these promises, dear friends, let us purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God.

- 1 Timothy 4:8 For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come.
- 2 Peter 1:3-4 His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.

Grace - God promises His forgiveness to those who repent and live as His ambassadors of reconciliation in the world.

- Psalm 34:18 The LORD is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.
- 2 Peter 3:9 The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.
- Mark 3:28 I tell you the truth, all the sins and blasphemies of men will be forgiven them.
- Matthew 18:19 Again, I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven.
- Psalm 9:9 The LORD is a refuge for the oppressed,
- Ezekiel 34:16 I will search for the lost and bring back the strays. I will bind up the injured and strengthen the weak, but the sleek and the strong I will destroy. I will shepherd the flock with justice.
- Hosea 14:4 I will heal their waywardness and love them freely, for my anger has turned away from them.
- Matthew 5:22 But I tell you that anyone who is angry with his brother will be subject to judgment. Again, anyone who says to his brother, 'Raca,' is answerable to the Sanhedrin. But anyone who says, 'You fool!' will be in danger of the fire of hell.

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- John 14:18 I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land.
- Mark 11:26 And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive him, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins.
- John 5:24 I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life.
- Exodus 34:6-7 And he passed in front of Moses, proclaiming, "The LORD, the LORD, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin. Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished; he punishes the children and their children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation."
- Psalm 37:8-11 Refrain from anger and turn from wrath; do not fret – it leads only to evil. For evil men will be cut off, but those who hope in the LORD will inherit the land. A little while, and the wicked will be no more; though you look for them, they will not be found. But the meek will inherit the land and enjoy great peace.
- Psalm 103:11-14 For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his love for those who fear him; as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us. As a father has compassion on his children, so the LORD has compassion on those who fear him; for he knows how we are formed, he remembers that we are dust.
- Psalm 145:8 The LORD is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and rich in love.

- Proverbs 28:13 He who conceals his sins does not prosper, but whoever confesses and renounces them finds mercy.
- Isaiah 1:18 "Come now, let us reason together," says the LORD: "though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall become like wool."
- Isaiah 44:22 I have swept away your offenses like a cloud, your sins like the morning mist. Return to me, for I have redeemed you.
- Isaiah 57:15 For this is what the high and lofty One says – he who lives forever, whose name is holy: "I live in a high and holy place, but also with him who is contrite and lowly in spirit, to revive the spirit of the lowly and to revive the heart of the contrite."

Good Stewardship - God promises His provision to those who depend on Him and steward life wisely.

- Genesis 15:7 He also said to him, "I am the LORD, who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans to give you this land to take possession of it."
- James 2:5 Listen, my dear brothers: Has not God chosen those who are poor in the eyes of the world to be rich in faith and to inherit the kingdom he promised those who love him?
- Hebrews 13:5 Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you."
- Deuteronomy 8:18 But remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth, and so confirms his covenant, which he swore to your forefathers, as it is today.
- 1 Chronicles 22:11 Now, my son, the LORD be with you, and may you have success and build the house of the LORD your God, as he said you would.

- 1 Chronicles 28:8 So now I charge you in the sight of all Israel and of the assembly of the LORD, and in the hearing of our God: Be careful to follow all the commands of the LORD your God, that you may possess this good land and pass it on as an inheritance to your descendants forever.
- Psalm 34:6-9 This poor man called, and the LORD heard him; he saved him out of all his troubles. The angel of the LORD encamps around those who fear him, and he delivers them. Taste and see that the LORD is good; blessed is the man who takes refuge in him. Fear the LORD, you his saints, for those who fear him lack nothing.
- Psalm 34:10 The lions may grow weak and hungry, but those who seek the LORD lack no good thing.
- Ezekiel 34:26-30 "I will bless them and the places surrounding my hill. I will send down showers in season; there will be showers of blessing. The trees of the field will yield their fruit and the ground will yield its crops; the people will be secure in their land. They will know that I am the LORD, when I break the bars of their yoke and rescue them from the hands of those who enslaved them. They will no longer be plundered by the nations, nor will wild animals devour them. They will live in safety, and no one will make them afraid. I will provide for them a land renowned for its crops, and they will no longer be victims of famine in the land or bear the scorn of the nations. Then they will know that I, the LORD their God, am with them and that they, the house of Israel, are my people, declares the Sovereign LORD. You my sheep, the sheep of my pasture, are people, and I am your God, declares the Sovereign LORD.""
- Psalm 72:6-7 He will be like rain falling on a mown field, like showers watering the earth. In his days the righteous will flourish; prosperity will abound till the moon is no more.

- Ezekiel 34:15 "I myself will tend my sheep • and have them lie down," declares the Sovereign LORD. Nehemiah 5:9-13 - So I continued, "What you are doing is not right. Shouldn't you walk in the fear of our God to avoid the reproach of our Gentile enemies? I and my brothers and my men are also lending the people money and grain. But let the exacting of usury stop! Give back to them immediately their fields, vineyards, olive groves and houses, and also the usury you are charging them—the hundredth part of the money, grain, new wine and oil." "We will give it back," they said. "And we will not demand anything more from them. We will do as you say." Then I summoned the priests and made the nobles and officials take an oath to do what they had promised. I also shook out the folds of my robe and said, "In this way may God shake out of his house and possessions every man who does not keep this promise. So may such a man be shaken out and emptied!" At this the whole assembly said, "Amen," and praised the LORD. And the people did as they had promised.
- Matthew 6:31-33 So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.
- Luke 6:38 Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.
- John 16:23 In that day you will no longer ask me anything. I tell you the truth, my Father will give you whatever you ask in my name.

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Glorification - God promises to glorify himself through reverent worshippers who serve His purposes.

- John 14:12-14 I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father. You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it.
- 2 Corinthians 1:20 For no matter how many promises God has made, they are "Yes" in Christ. And so through him the "Amen" is spoken by us to the glory of God.
- Isaiah 28:5 In that day the LORD Almighty will be a glorious crown, a beautiful wreath for the remnant of his people.
- Romans 8:17 Now if we are children, then we are heirs – heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.
- Psalm 50:14-15 Sacrifice thank offerings to God, fulfill your vows to the Most High, and call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you will honor me.
- Joshua 23:14-16 "Now I am about to go the way of all the earth. You know with all your heart and soul that not one of all the good promises the LORD your God gave you has failed. Every promise has been fulfilled; not one has failed. But just as every good promise of the LORD your God has come true, so the LORD will bring on you all the evil he has threatened, until he has destroyed you from this good land he has given you. If you violate the covenant of the LORD your God, which he commanded you, and go and serve other gods and bow down to them, the LORD's anger will burn against you, and you will quickly perish from the good land he has given you."

- Exodus 15:2 The LORD is my strength and song, And He has become my salvation; He is my God, and I will praise Him; My father's God, and I will exalt Him.
- 1 Samuel 2:2 There is no one holy like the LORD; there is no one besides you; there is no Rock like our God.
- Psalm 3:3-6 But you are a shield around me, O LORD; you bestow glory on me and lift up my head. To the LORD I cry aloud, and he answers me from his holy hill. Selah. I lie down and sleep; I wake again, because the LORD sustains me. I will not fear the tens of thousands drawn up against me on every side.
- Psalm 8:3-5 When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, what is man that you are mindful of him, the son of man that you care for him? You made him a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him with glory and honor.
- Psalm 27:5-6 For in the day of trouble he will keep me safe in his dwelling; he will hide me in the shelter of his tabernacle and set me high upon a rock. Then my head will be exalted above the enemies who surround me; at his tabernacle will I sacrifice with shouts of joy; I will sing and make music to the LORD.
- Psalm 42:5 Why are you downcast, O my soul? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God.
- Isaiah 9:6-7 For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the LORD Almighty will accomplish this.

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Gifts - God promises His empowerment and protection to those who surrender to Him and serve through His strength.

- 2 Samuel 22:17-21 He reached down from on high and took hold of me; he drew me out of deep waters. He rescued me from my powerful enemy, from my foes, who were too strong for me. They confronted me in the day of my disaster, but the LORD was my support. He brought me out into a spacious place; he rescued me because he delighted in me. The LORD has dealt with me according to my righteousness; according to the cleanness of my hands he has rewarded me.
- 2 Samuel 22:31-33 As for God, his way is perfect; the word of the LORD is flawless. He is a shield for all who take refuge in him. For who is God besides the LORD? And who is the Rock except our God? It is God who arms me with strength and makes my way perfect.
- Psalm 29:11 The LORD gives strength to his people; the LORD blesses his people with peace.
- Psalm 34:17 The righteous cry out, and the LORD hears them; he delivers them from all their troubles.
- Psalm 34:19 A righteous man may have many troubles, but the LORD delivers him from them all;
- Psalm 37:39-40 The salvation of the righteous comes from the LORD; he is their stronghold in time of trouble. The LORD helps them and delivers them; he delivers them from the wicked and saves them, because they take refuge in him.
- Psalm 63:8 My soul clings to you; your right hand upholds me.

- Psalm 34:7 The angel of the LORD encamps around those who fear him, and he delivers them.
- Isaiah 40:29 He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak.
- Isaiah 40:31 but those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.
- Isaiah 41:10 So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.
- Isaiah 49:25 But this is what the LORD says: "Yes, captives will be taken from warriors, and plunder retrieved from the fierce; I will contend with those who contend with you, and your children I will save."
- Psalm 91:14-16 "Because he loves me," says the LORD, "I will rescue him; I will protect him, for he acknowledges my name. He will call upon me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble, I will deliver him and honor him. With long life will I satisfy him and show him my salvation."
- Matthew 17:20 "I tell you the truth, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you."
- Matthew 21:21-22 Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, if you have faith and do not doubt, not only can you do what was done to the fig tree, but also you can say to this mountain, 'Go, throw yourself into the sea,' and it will be done. If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer."
- Mark 9:23 "'If you can'?" said Jesus. "Everything is possible for him who believes."

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- John 14:12-14 I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father. You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it.
- John 15:7 If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you.
- Acts 1:8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.
- Deuteronomy 31:6 Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the LORD your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you.
- Deuteronomy 31:8 The LORD himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged.
- 1 Chronicles 28:20 David also said to Solomon his son, "Be strong and courageous, and do the work. Do not be afraid or discouraged, for the LORD God, my God, is with you. He will not fail you or forsake you until all the work for the service of the temple of the LORD is finished."
- Psalm 46:1 God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble.
- Isaiah 41:13 For I am the LORD, your God, who takes hold of your right hand and says to you, 'Do not fear; I will help you.'

- Psalm 12:5-6 "Because of the oppression of the weak and the groaning of the needy, I will now arise," says the LORD. "I will protect them from those who malign them." And the words of the LORD are flawless, like silver refined in a furnace of clay, purified seven times.
- Genesis 15:1 After this, the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision: "Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your very great reward.
- Joshua 21:44-45 The LORD gave them rest on every side, just as he had sworn to their forefathers. Not one of their enemies withstood them; the LORD handed all their enemies over to them. Not one of all the LORD's good promises to the house of Israel failed; every one was fulfilled.
- 1 Samuel 2:2 He said: "The LORD is my rock, my fortress and my deliverer; my God is my rock, in whom I take refuge, my shield and the horn of my salvation. He is my stronghold, my refuge and my savior – from violent men you save me. I call to the LORD, who is worthy of praise, and I am saved from my enemies."

Group - God promises His love, peace and presence to members of His Family.

- John 6:37 All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away.
- Deuteronomy 29:12-13 You are standing here in order to enter into a covenant with the LORD your God, a covenant the LORD is making with you this day and sealing with an oath, to confirm you this day as his people, that he may be your God as he promised you and as he swore to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.
- Exodus 15:13 In your unfailing love you will lead the people you have redeemed. In your strength you will guide them to your holy dwelling.
- John 3:16 For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.
- Psalm 22:24 For he has not despised or disdained the suffering of the afflicted one; he has not hidden his face from him but has listened to his cry for help.
- Psalm 4:7-8 You have filled my heart with greater joy than when their grain and new wine abound. I will lie down and sleep in peace, for you alone, O LORD, make me dwell in safety.
- Psalm 62:11-12 One thing God has spoken, two things have I heard: that you, O God, are strong, and that you, O Lord, are loving. Surely you will reward each person according to what he has done.
- Psalm 46:11 The LORD Almighty is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress. Selah
- Philippians 4:7 And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

- Ephesians 3:6 This mystery is that through the • gospel the Gentiles are heirs together with Israel, members together of one body, and sharers together in the promise in Christ Jesus.
- Ephesians 6:1-3 Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. "Honor your father and mother" - which is the first commandment with a promise – "that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth."
- Psalm 68:5 A father to the fatherless, a defender of widows, is God in his holy dwelling.
- 2 Chronicles 7:14 The LORD is a refuge for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble. Those who know your name will trust in you, for you, LORD, have never forsaken those who seek you.
- Psalm 2:7 I will proclaim the decree of the LORD: He said to me, "You are my Son; today I have become your Father."
- John 14:27 Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.
- Psalm 95:7 For he is our God and we are the people of his pasture, the flock under his care.
- Isaiah 9:2 The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned.
- Isaiah 25:8-9 He will swallow up death forever. The Sovereign LORD will wipe away the tears from all faces; he will remove the disgrace of his people from all the earth. The LORD has spoken. In that day they will say, "Surely this is our God; we trusted in him, and he saved us. This is the LORD, we trusted in him; let us rejoice and be glad in his salvation."
- Isaiah 26:3-4 You will keep in perfect peace him whose mind is steadfast, because he trusts in you. Trust in the LORD forever, for the LORD, the LORD, is the Rock eternal.

Appendix G: The Promises of God and the 7 G's

- Isaiah 32:17-18 The fruit of righteousness will be peace; the effect of righteousness will be quietness and confidence forever. My people will live in peaceful dwelling places, in secure homes, in undisturbed places of rest.
- Isaiah 40:11 He tends his flock like a shepherd: He gathers the lambs in his arms and carries them close to his heart; he gently leads those that have young.
- Isaiah 54:10 "Though the mountains be shaken en and the hills be removed, yet my unfailing love for you will not be shaken nor my covenant of peace be removed," says the LORD, who has compassion on you.
- Genesis 9:11-13 I establish my covenant with you: Never again will all life be cut off by the waters of a flood; never again will there be a flood to destroy the earth. And God said, "This is the sign of the covenant I am making between me and you and every living creature with you, a covenant for all generations to come: I have set my rainbow in the clouds, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and the earth."
- Genesis 17:1-2 When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to him and said, "I am God Almighty; walk before me and be blameless. I will confirm my covenant between me and you and will greatly increase your numbers."
- Genesis 17:4 As for me, this is my covenant with you: You will be the father of many nations.
- Genesis 17:7 I will establish my covenant as an everlasting covenant between me and you and your descendants after you for the generations to come, to be your God and the God of your descendants after you.

- Genesis 17:19 Then God said, "Yes, but your wife Sarah will bear you a son, and you will call him Isaac. I will establish my covenant with him as an everlasting covenant for his descendants after him."
- Deuteronomy 4:31 For the LORD your God is a merciful God; he will not abandon or destroy you or forget the covenant with your forefathers, which he confirmed to them by oath.
- Matthew 28:18-20 Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Making Promises (Vows)

Vows are spoken promises made to God, and are often made in response to help received from God. A person making a vow can offer a thing, an action, or the promise of a future action. It is an act of trust between that person and God. A person making a vow is expected to fulfill it by doing what is promised. Vows were used in various ways in the Bible.

A vow (in the Contemporary English Version often translated as "promise") is not the same as an oath. In general, an oath reassures others that the speaker of the oath is being truthful, whereas a vow involves a promise to God. The New Testament states that oaths should be avoided (Matthew 5:34-37; James 5:12). Sometimes vows were made to get something from God. In return for God's help or blessing, the person making the vow promised to do something or give something. For example, Jacob promised to worship God and give God a tenth of everything he owned if God would protect him (Genesis 28: 20-22). The brave warrior Jephthah promised God he would sacrifice the first person who greeted him after battling the Ammonites if God let him win the battle (Judges 11). Hannah prayed for God to give her a son, and in return she promised to dedicate him to serve the Lord at Shiloh (1 Samuel 1). And the sailors with Jonah made promises to God if He would calm a violent storm at sea (Jonah 1:13-16). See also Acts 21:23.

Other promises were simply made to thank God. Nothing was expected in return. King David promised that he would not rest until he had found a home for the Lord and the sacred chest (Psalm 132:2-5).

The promises we make to God are not given to get something from Him, but are part of our personal relationship with Him. The more we press into His Lordship over our lives, the more He will train us in His righteousness and guide us in experiencing and expressing the depths of joy that come from our covenant relationship. God also made promises. God's promises are always fulfilled (see Numbers 23:19). Though David didn't ask for it, God promised that someone in David's family would always be king (2 Samuel 7; Psalm 132:11,12). Some other examples of God's promises or vows can be found in Genesis. In Genesis 8:21, the Lord promised never again to destroy everything that breathes, or to punish the earth for the sinful things its people do. In Genesis 12:2,3, the Lord promised to bless Abram and make his descendants into a great nation, and in Genesis 15:5,6, the Lord promised Abram's descendants would be as uncountable as the stars.

The Law of Moses had rules for making promises or vows. There were laws about offerings given when making a vow of peace (Leviticus 7:16-18) and about what kind of offering was acceptable when making a sacrifice for a vow (Leviticus 22:17-25; Numbers 15:1-10). Laws also set the price to buy back people or property promised to God (Leviticus 27:1-25). There were special rules for those who dedicated themselves to God by vowing to become Nazirites (Numbers 6:1-21). It is possible that the apostle Paul was making a kind of Nazirite vow when he cut his hair and made a promise to God at Cenchrea (Acts 18:18).

Numbers 30 deals mostly with vows made by women. A young woman living at home could make a vow, but her father had the power to cancel it. If he did, she no longer had to keep the promise and would not be blamed. The same was true of a husband who disapproved of his wife's vow. Widows and divorced women could make vows and were expected to keep them, because no one had the power to cancel their vows. Making a promise to the Lord was not required, but when a promise was made, the Lord expected it to be kept (Deuteronomy 23:21-23; Ecclesiastes 5:4,5).



Appendix H: Character Strengths and Virtues

Twenty-four Character Strengths and Corresponding Core Virtues

A group of leading psychologists have come to believe positive character strengths are essential to mental health. Their mission is to transform social science to work on virtue, positive emotion and positive institutions. Following are the results of their project to identify those character strengths. The strengths are derived from many sources, including Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Confucianism, Taoism, Buddhism, Hinduism, and Athenian virtues (e.g. Aristotle, Plato, and Socrates). Also considered were previous efforts such as the values of Boy Scouts, Charlemagne's Code of Chivalry, as well as the works of Erik Erikson, Abraham Maslow, and others. We have slightly adapted their definitions and categories, but tried to stay as close to the original definitions of the character strengths as possible.

Wisdom and Knowledge

- 1. Creativity (originality, ingenuity)
- 2. Curiosity (interest, novelty-seeking, openness to experience)
- 3. Open-mindedness (judgment, critical thinking)
- 4. Love of learning
- 5. Perspective (wisdom)

Courage

- 6. Bravery (valor)
- 7. Persistence (perseverance, industriousness)
- 8. Integrity (authenticity, honesty)
- 9. Vitality (zest, enthusiasm, vigor, energy)

Humanity

- 10. Love (valuing close relationships, sharing, and caring)
- 11. Kindness (generosity, nurturance, care, compassion, altruistic love, "niceness")
- 12. Social intelligence (emotional intelligence, personal intelligence)

Justice

- 13. Citizenship (social responsibility, loyalty, teamwork)
- 14. Fairness (equal treatment according to notions of fairness and justice)
- 15. Leadership (encouraging and organizing group activities)

Temperance

- 16. Forgiveness and mercy
- 17. Humility/Modesty
- 18. Prudence (carefulness about words and deeds)
- 19. Self-regulation (self-control)

Transcendence

20. Appreciation of beauty and excellence (awe, wonder, elevation)

21. Gratitude (awareness of good things that happen, thankfulness and giving thanks)

22. Hope (optimism, future-mindedness, future-orientation)

- 23. Humor (playfulness)
- 24. Spirituality (religiousness, faith, purpose)

The 24 Character Strengths re-categorized according to the 7 Values of Abundant Living

Strengths of Grace

1. Forgiveness and Mercy – "Forgiveness" represents a suite of prosocial changes that occur within an individual who has been offended or damaged by a relationship partner. When people forgive, their basic motivations or action tendencies regarding the transgressor become more positive (e.g., benevolent, kind, generous) and less negative (e.g., vengeful, avoidant). It is useful to distinguish between forgivingness, which is a readiness or proneness to forgive, and forgiveness, which can be thought of as psychological changes vis-à-vis a specific transgressor and a specific transgression. Forgiveness can be considered a specialized form of "Mercy," which is a more general concept reflecting kindness, compassion, or leniency toward (a) a transgressor, (b) someone over whom one has power or authority, or (c) someone in great distress. Individuals with a strong disposition to forgive would endorse statements such as the following:

- When someone hurts my feelings, I manage to get over it fairly quickly.
- I don't hold a grudge for very long.
- When people make me angry, I am usually able to get over my bad feelings toward them.
- Seeking revenge doesn't help people to solve their problems.
- I think it is important to do what I can to mend my relationships with people who have hurt or betrayed me in the past.
- I am not the type of person to harm someone simply because he or she harmed me.
- I am not the type of person who spends hours thinking of how to get even with people who have done bad things to me.

2. Hope (Optimism, Future-Mindedness, Future Orientation) – These represent a cognitive, emotional, and motivational stance toward the future. Thinking about the future, expecting that desired events and outcomes will occur, acting in ways believed to make them more likely, and feeling confident that they will, given appropriate efforts, sustain good cheer in the here and now and galvanize goal-directed actions. Individuals with this strength would strongly endorse such statements as the following:

- Despite challenges, I always remain hopeful about the future.
- I always look on the bright side.
- I am confident that my way of doing things will work out for the best.
- I believe that good will always triumph over evil.
- I expect the best.
- I have a clear picture in my mind about what I want to happen in the future.
- I have a plan for what I want to be doing 5 years from now.
- I know that I will succeed with the goals I set for myself.
- I never go into a game or competition expecting to lose.
- If I get a bad grade or evaluation, I focus on the next opportunity and plan to do better.

3. Humor (Playfulness) – "Humor" may be easier to recognize than to define, but among its current meanings are (a) the playful recognition, enjoyment, and/or creation of incongruity; (b) a composed and cheerful view on adversity that allows one to see its light side and thereby sustain a good mood; and (c) the ability to make others smile or laugh. Individuals with this strength would strongly endorse such statements as the following:

- Whenever my friends are in a gloomy mood, I try to tease them out of it.
- I welcome the opportunity to brighten someone else's day with laughter.

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- Most people would say I am fun to be with.
- I try to add some humor to whatever I do.
- I never allow a gloomy situation to take away my sense of humor.
- I can usually find something to laugh or joke about even in trying situations.

Strengths of Group

4. Love - "Love" represents a cognitive, behavioral, and emotional stance toward others that takes three prototypical forms. One is love for the individuals who are our primary sources of affection, protection and care. We rely on them to make our welfare a priority and to be available to us when needed. They make us feel safe, and we are distressed by prolonged separations from them. The prototype of this form is a child's love for a parent. Another form is love for the individuals who depend on us to make them feel safe and cared for. We comfort and protect them, assist and support them, make sacrifices for their benefit, put their needs ahead of our own, and feel happy when they are happy. The prototype of this form is a parent's love for a child. The third form is love that involves passionate desire for sexual, physical, and emotional closeness with an individual whom we consider special and who makes us feel special. The prototype is romantic love. Relationships can involve more than one type of love. For example, best friends may love each other in both a child-parent and parent-child way in the sense that each leans on as well as looks out for the other. Mate relationships are unique in being the only social tie that encompasses all three forms of love. Individuals with this strength are likely to strongly endorse such statements about themselves as the following:

- There is someone with whom I feel free to be myself.
- There is someone I trust to help and support me.

- There is someone I hate to be away from for very long.
- There is someone for whom I would do almost anything.
- There is someone whose happiness matters as much to me as my own.
- There is someone whose welfare I am committed to.
- There is someone with whom I am physically affectionate.
- There is someone in whose company I feel deep contentment.
- There is someone I am passionate about.

5. Kindness (Generosity, Nurturance, Care, Compassion, Altruistic Love, "Niceness") -All these terms form a network of closely related terms indicating a common orientation of the self toward the other. This orientation can be contrasted with self-centeredness, in which the self relates to others only insofar as they contribute to his or her agenda and are therefore considered useful. Kindness and altruistic love require the assertion of a common humanity in which others are worthy of attention and affirmation for no utilitarian reasons but for their own sake. The affective or emotional ground of such kindness distinguishes it from a merely dutiful or principlebased respect for other people. Such affective states are expected to give rise to helping behaviors that are not based on an assurance of reciprocity, reputational gain, or any other benefits to self, although such benefits may emerge and need not be resisted. Individuals with this strength would strongly endorse statements such as the following:

- Others are just as important as I am.
- All human beings are of equal worth.
- My having a warm and generous nature brings reassurance and joy to others.
- Giving is more important than receiving.
- Doing good for others with love and kindness is the best way to live.

- I care for the ungrateful as well as the grateful.
- I am not the center of the universe but part of a common humanity.
- People who are suffering need compassion.
- People in need require care.
- It is important to help everyone, not just family and friends.

6. Social intelligence (Emotional Intelligence, Personal Intelligence) - "Intelligence" refers to the ability to think abstractly – to understand similarities and differences among things, to recognize patterns, and to see other relations. Intelligence can be divided into subtypes that focus on a specific area of reasoning. For example, cognitive intelligence divides into verbal, perceptual, organizational, and social intelligences, among others. There also exist a group of hot intelligences, so called because they process "hot" information: signals concerning motives, feelings, and other domains of direct relevance to an individual's wellbeing and/or survival. Three such intelligences are included in social intelligence: personal, social and emotional intelligence. People who are high in hot intelligence are said to be able to perform certain tasks well, such as the following:

- Identify emotional content in faces, voices, and designs (emotional intelligence)
- Use emotional information to facilitate cognitive activities (emotional intelligence)
- Understand what emotions mean regarding relationships, how they progress over time, and how they blend with one another (emotional intelligence)
- Understand and manage emotions (emotional intelligence)
- Accurately assess one's own performance at a variety of tasks (personal intelligence)
- Accurately assess one's own emotions and feelings (emotional, personal intelligence)
- Accurately assess one's own motives (personal, social intelligence)

- Use social information to get others to cooperate (social intelligence)
- Identify social dominance and sociopolitical relationships among individuals and groups (social intelligence)
- Act wisely in relationships (social intelligence)

7. Citizenship (Social Responsibility, Loyalty, Patriotism, Teamwork) - Citizenship, social responsibility, loyalty, patriotism and teamwork represent a feeling of identification with and sense of obligation to a common good that includes the self but that stretches beyond one's own self-interest. The individual with these strengths has a strong sense of duty, works for the good of the group rather than for personal gain, is loyal to friends, and can be trusted to pull his or her weight. He or she is a good teammate. A generative spirit and a sense of responsibility for the community are further indicators of this strength. Individuals with this strength are likely to be active in the civic affairs of their communities – by voting, joining voluntary associations, or contributing time and money to social or environmental causes. "Social responsibility," defined as an orientation to help others even when there is nothing to be gained from them, has a more altruistic tone than its semantic cousins. "Loyalty" connotes an unwavering commitment, a bond of trust – whether in friendship or in fidelity to a group, its principles, and its cause. "Patriotism" is a sign of loyalty to one's homeland or nation without the corresponding hostility to citizens of other nations implied in the concept of nationalism. These strengths share the aspects of generativity, particularly as the latter is expressed in a public way, that is, an orientation to make an enduring contribution to future generations beyond one's own kin. "Teamwork" is perhaps the most behavioral of the synonyms we have included in this character strength; it refers to one's ability to work with others in a group for a common purpose – to collaborate and cooperate. The common thread for people exhibiting these values is that they endorse public-interest over self-interest goals as values by which to live. They identify with the common good and want to make the world a better place for future

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generations. They would endorse such statements as the following:

- I have a responsibility to improve the world in which I live.
- All of us should give some of our time for the good of our town or country.
- It is important to me personally that I work to correct social and economic inequalities.
- It is important to me personally that I help others who are in difficulty.
- It is important to me personally to be involved in programs to clean up the environment.

Strengths of Growth

8. Love of Learning – This is a strength that teachers would like to see in their students, that parents want to encourage in their children, that therapists support in their clients, and that employers try to foster in their employees. It describes the way a person engages new information and skills generally and/or the well-developed individual interest with which he or she engages particular content. Love of Learning describes the process of engaging content that may or may not result in immediate achievement or any immediate benefit of achievement as defined by some external standard like academic tests. Instead, over time a person may develop a deeper or wider knowledge of contents to be learned and be positioned to make substantial and creative contributions to others' understanding of them. People with this character strength would strongly endorse statements such as the following:

- I can't do this task now, but I think I will be able to do it in the future.
- I like to learn new things.
- I will do whatever it takes in order to do a task correctly.
- Learning is a positive experience.
- I care more about doing a thorough job than whether I receive a good grade.

9. Persistence (Perseverance, Industriousness) – "Persistence" is the voluntary continuation of a goal-directed action in spite of obstacles, difficulties, or discouragement. Simply measuring how long someone works at a task does not adequately capture the essence of persistence, because continuing to perform something that is fun or rewarding does not require one to endure and overcome setbacks. In this character strength we can use the terms perseverance, industriousness and persistence interchangeably.

10. Integrity (Authenticity, Honesty) – Integrity describes people being true to themselves, accurately representing – privately and publicly – their internal states, intentions and commitments. Such persons accept and take responsibility for their feelings and behaviors, owning them, as it were, and reaping substantial benefits by so doing. The word "Integrity" comes from the Latin *integritas*, meaning wholeness, soundness, untouched, whole, and entire. It is a regular pattern of behavior that is consistent with espoused values – practicing what one preaches; public justification of moral convictions, even if those convictions are not popular. Individuals with the character strength of integrity would strongly endorse such statements as these:

- It is more important to be myself than to be popular.
- When people keep telling the truth, things work out.
- I would never lie just to get something I wanted from someone.
- My life is guided and given meaning by my code of values.
- It is important to me to be open and honest about my feelings.
- I always follow through on my commitments, even when it costs me.
- "To thine own self be true, and thou canst not then be false to any man."
- I dislike phonies who pretend to be what they are not.

11. Self-regulation (Self-Control, Self-discipline) - "Self-regulation" refers to how a person exerts control over his or her own responses so as to pursue goals and live up to standards. These responses include thoughts, emotions, impulses, performances and other behaviors. The standards include ideals, moral injunctions, norms, performance targets and the expectations of other people. The term "self-control" is sometimes used as a synonym for "self-regulation," but other writers use it more narrowly to refer specifically to controlling one's impulses so as to behave in a moral fashion. The term "self-discipline" is also related to "self-regulation" and usually is used in a somewhat narrower sense, such as to refer to making oneself do things that one does not want to do and resisting temptation. Overriding or altering one's responses is especially important in self-regulation. Living organisms, especially complex ones such as human beings, are constantly responding to both internal and external stimuli, but to act on all of these responses would not be optimal or adaptive. Hence, people often find it useful to override their initial responses. They may direct their thought processes other than where their minds naturally wander, they may attempt to change their emotional responses away from how they initially feel, and they may restrain themselves from carrying out impulses and desires. They may try to perform better than they would normally do, such as by making themselves persist in a difficult task. Most acts of self-regulation involve stopping the self from having a response, such as when a dieter refrains from eating a tempting but fattening food. There are, however, some instances of self-regulation that entail initiating a response, such as when a sleepy man drags himself out of bed on a cold morning.

Strengths of Gifts (Divine Empowerment):

12. Creativity (Originality, Ingenuity) – "Creativity" entails two essential components. First, a creative person must produce ideas or behaviors that are recognizably original. The behaviors or ideas must be not only original but adaptive. To be adaptive the individual's originality must make a positive contribution to that person's life or to the lives of others. 13. Bravery (Valor) – "Bravery" refers to the disposition to voluntarily act, perhaps fearfully, in a dangerous circumstance, where the relevant risks are reasonably appraised, in an effort to obtain or preserve some perceived good for oneself or others, recognizing that the desired perceived good may not be realized. Bravery raises the moral and social conscience of a society. Because bravery entails judgment, the ends that a person's action serves are part of the consideration about whether an act reflects bravery. Bravery is usually considered doing what is right, including confronting the status quo or opposing an unhealthy idea. As such, it takes on a moral tone.

14. Vitality (Zest, Enthusiasm, Vigor, Energy) – A vital person is someone whose aliveness and spirit are expressed not only in a personal productivity and activity – such individuals often infectiously energize those with whom they come into contact. It describes a dynamic aspect of well-being marked by the subjective experience of energy and aliveness. As an indicator of organismic wellness, vitality is directly and interactively related to both psychological and somatic factors. At the somatic level, vitality is linked to good physical health and bodily functioning, as well as freedom from fatigue and illness. At the psychological level, vitality reflects experiences of volition, effectiveness, and integration of the self at both intrapersonal and interpersonal levels. Psychological tensions, conflicts, and stressors detract from experienced vitality. At a deeper level vitality refers to feeling alive, enthusiastic, and spirited. A person feels such aliveness when physically well, when psychologically integrated rather than fragmented, and when experiencing meaning and purpose rather than feeling lost, disconnected, or aimless. Individuals with a high level of vitality would strongly endorse such statements as these:

- I feel alive and vital.
- I have energy and spirit.
- I nearly always feel awake and alert.
- I feel energized.
- I feel full of pep.
- I rarely feel worn out.

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Strengths of Glorification

15. Humility and Modesty – The Key features of "Humility" include:

- An accurate (not underestimated) sense of one's abilities and achievements.
- The ability to acknowledge one's mistakes, imperfections, gaps in knowledge, and limitations (often with reference to a "higher power").
- Openness to new ideas, contradictory information, and advice.
- Keeping one's abilities and accomplishments in perspective.
- Relatively low focus on the self or an ability to "forget the self".
- Appreciation of the value of all things, as well as the many different ways that people and things can contribute to our world.

In contrast, the term "Modesty" refers primarily to the moderate estimation of one's merits or achievements and also extends into other issues relating to propriety in dress and social behavior. Social-psychological studies have often approached modesty in behavioral terms – for example, not taking full credit for success or lowering estimates for one's future success when in the presence of another.

16. Appreciation of beauty and excellence, or simply appreciation (Awe, Wonder, Elevation) – "Appreciation" refers to the ability to find, recognize and take pleasure in the existence of goodness in the physical and social worlds. A person high on this strength frequently feels awe and related emotions (including admiration, wonder and elevation) while, for example, walking in the woods or in a city, while reading novels or newspapers, while learning about people's lives or while watching sports or movies. A person low on this strength goes about life as if wearing blinders to that which is beautiful and moving, taking little pleasure in the scenes that pass by or in the strengths, talents, virtues, and accomplishments of others. We presume that people whose minds and hearts are open to beauty and excellence find more joy in daily life, more ways to find meaning in their own lives and more ways to connect deeply with other people. Three principal types of goodness for which it is beneficial to be responsive are:

- Physical beauty (primarily the beauty of the visual environment but also auditory beauty such as music)
- Skill or talent (displays of virtuosity or superhuman ability by other people)
- Virtue or moral goodness (displays of kindness, compassion, forgiveness, or many of the other virtues)

Each of these three kinds of goodness can produce awe-related emotions in observers. In the strongest cases beauty produces awe, skill produces admiration, and virtue produces the emotion of moral elevation. All three of these emotional reactions are related as members of the family of self-transcendent emotions, of which awe appears to be the central member.

17. Spirituality (Religiousness, Faith, Purpose) – "Spirituality" and "Religiousness" refer to beliefs and practices that are grounded in the conviction that there is a transcendent (non-physical) dimension of life. These beliefs are persuasive, pervasive, and stable. They inform the kinds of attributions that people make, the meanings they construct, and the ways they conduct relationships. The following sorts of questions and statements distinguish between individuals who are spiritual or religious and those who are not:

- What is your current religious preference?
- Are you a member of a church or religious institution?
- How often do you attend religious or worship services?

- How religious would you say you are?
- How important is religion in your life today?
- How spiritual would you say you are?
- How often do you pray?
- How often do you meditate?
- How often do you read religious materials or watch or listen to religious programs?
- I believe there is a sacred force in all living things and that this force connects us to each other.
- I believe in life after death.
- I believe that every life has purpose.
- I feel God's presence.
- I look to God/a higher power for support, guidance, and strength.
- My belief in God, my Higher Power, helps me to understand my purpose.
- My belief in God, my Higher Power, helps me to understand the meaning of the things that I experience.

Spirituality is universal. Although the specific content of spiritual beliefs varies, all people have a concept of an ultimate, transcendent, sacred, and divine force. Further, all religions seek to help people to grapple with core existential concerns (i.e., questions of purpose and meaning) and posit rules and values that guide individuals' relationships, as well as their efforts to cope with the travails of life. The word "religiousness" (derived from the Latin word *religio*) refers both to a belief in the existence of a divine or greater-than-human force and to an individual's adherence to the beliefs and rituals that signify worship of and reverence for this divine entity. "Spirituality" is derived from the Latin word spiritus, which means the breath of life. According to the Judeo-Christian account of the genesis of human life, the physical entity that was the first human became fully alive only after God breathed "the breath of life" into him. Through that breath God accomplished two important ends. First, he achieved a profound level of intimacy with humans. Second, through that act of intimacy he imparted an essential,

enlivening, divine, and sacred aspect of himself into each human being. This divine breath of life that resides in the body is believed to be the source of the capacity for creativity, the ability to grasp the sacred, and the capacity for love, intimacy, harmony, growth, compassion, goodness and optimism.

Strengths of Guidance

18. Curiosity (Interest, Novelty-seeking, Openness to Experience) – This involves the active recognition, pursuit, and regulation of one's experience in response to challenging opportunities. All individuals experience curiosity, but they differ in its depth and breadth, and in their threshold and willingness to experience it. When individuals experience these positive emotional-motivational states, they initiate and sustain goal-directed behaviors in response to incentive cues. Novelty-seeking reflects an individual's propensity for seeking new, different, and exciting experiences to elevate stimulation to an optimal level; this includes a willingness to endure high levels of risk (e.g. pain and injuries when rock climbing, rejection when meeting new people) to obtain the benefits of novelty. Openness to experience is a higherorder personality dimension involving receptivity to novel fantasies, feelings, ideas, and values. The experience of curiosity is more of a mechanism of action (cognitively, emotionally, and/or behaviorally), whereas openness is more of a psychological predisposition. Although curiosity, novelty-seeking and openness are all associated with a myriad of positive outcomes, novelty-seeking may also lead to negative outcomes if it results in illegal substance use, immoral sexual behavior, and the like.

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19. Open-Mindedness (Judgment, Critical Thinking) – "Open-Mindedness" is the willingness to search actively for evidence against one's favored beliefs, plans or goals, and to weigh such evidence fairly when it is available. Individuals with the strength of "Open-Mindedness" would probably endorse statements such as the following:

- Abandoning a previous belief is a sign of strong character.
- People should always take into consideration evidence that goes against their beliefs.
- Beliefs should always be revised in response to new evidence.

20. Perspective (Wisdom) – Wisdom generates wise processes, wise products, and wise people. It is distinct from Intelligence; represents a superior level of knowledge, judgment, and capacity to give advice; allows the individual to address important and difficult questions about the conduct and meaning of life; and is used for the good or wellbeing of oneself and others. If modesty did not intrude, individuals with the character strength of Perspective would strongly endorse such statements as the following:

- I have self-knowledge.
- I bring both feeling and rationality into decision-making.
- I realize larger patterns of meaning or relationship.
- I have a wider perspective.
- I have a strong need to contribute to others and society.
- I take into consideration the needs of others.
- I understand the limits of what I can know and do.
- I am able to see to the heart of important problems.

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• I have an accurate view of my strengths and weaknesses.

- I am turned to for advice.
- I behave in a manner consistent with my own personal standards.

21. Leadership – As a personal quality, "Leadership," refers to an integrated constellation of cognitive and temperament attributes that fosters an orientation toward influencing and helping others, as well as directing and motivating their actions toward collective success. Leadership is inherently a social phenomenon. Many theorists treat leadership as residing in the interaction or relationship between an individual who occupies, by virtue of appointment or election, a leadership role and individuals who are in follower roles. According to this perspective, the quality of leadership depends on the separate and joint influences of leader attributes, follower attributes, and contextual or situational constraints. However, the practice of leadership can be distinguished from leadership as a personal quality. Leadership as a practice includes (a) defining, establishing, identifying, or translating a direction for collective action by one's followers; and (b) facilitating or enabling the collective processes that lead to achieving this purpose (Zaccaro & Klimoski, 2001). Leadership as a personal quality reflects the motivation and capacity to seek out, attain, and successfully carry out leader roles in social systems. It reflects an ability and desire to influence and motivate collective action. Personality attributes that correspond to leadership, and have often been treated as synonymous, include socialized power, authority, dominance, charisma, ascendancy, and social assertiveness. Individuals with this strength are likely to strongly endorse such statements about themselves as the following:

- I prefer to take on the leadership role in a group.
- I am often able to plan a course of action for my group.

- I am often able to motivate others to act in a certain way.
- I am often able to help others do a task better.
- I am often able to organize others so that they can work together more effectively.
- People generally look to me to help solve complex problems.
- People generally look to me to resolve conflicts and keep a group together.
- I am often the spokesperson for my group.
- I generally take the initiative in social situations.
- I usually take charge in emergencies.

Strengths of Good Stewardship

22. Fairness – This is the product of moral judgment – the process by which people determine what is morally right and what is morally harmful. Accompanying the development of moral judgment is a broader set of values that come to be embodied psychologically and socially through the development of psychosocial skills and ways of being. Being committed to fairness in all of one's social relations, developing skill in the abstract logic of equitable arrangements, becoming sensitized to issues of social injustice, coming to embody compassion and caring for others, and developing the perceptiveness necessary for relational understanding are desirable developmental outcomes. These concepts embodied in "Fairness" name the psychological strengths and virtues that allow us to be responsible citizens, trustworthy friends, and generally moral people. Individuals who have developed the psychological strengths associated with "Fairness" would strongly endorse such statements as the following:

- Everyone should get a fair share.
- It's wrong to use people.
- I wouldn't want to cheat anyone, any more than I would want to be cheated.
- I try to be kind to everyone.

- Everyone deserves respect.
- We're all in this together.
- People are ends in themselves.
- No one deserves to be discriminated against because of the color of his skin.
- We are responsible for our own behavior.
- Even if society says it's all right to do something, if it doesn't match my personal sense of what's right, I wouldn't do it.

23. Prudence – "Prudence" is a cognitive orientation to the personal future, a form of practical reasoning and self-management that helps to achieve long-term goals effectively. Prudent individuals show a farsighted and deliberative concern for the consequences of their actions and decisions, successfully resist impulses and other choices that satisfy shorter term goals at the expense of longer ones, have a flexible and moderate approach to life, and strive for balance among their goals and ends. In everyday life, good examples of prudence include saving for the future; planning for unexpected as well as expected contingencies; avoiding situations known to have led in the past to impulsive choices; making life decisions by considering distant as well as immediate benefits and costs, and paying heed to their probable consistency or conflict with one's other plans; and deliberating about one's personal goals in a pragmatic manner. Individuals with this strength have the following attributes:

- They take a foresighted stance toward their personal future, thinking and caring about it, planning for it, and holding long-term goals and aspirations.
- They are skilled at resisting self-defeating impulses and at persisting in beneficial activities that lack immediate appeal.
- They show a style of thinking about everyday life choices that is reflective, deliberate, and practical.
- They harmonize the multiple goals and interests that motivate them, forming them into a stable, coherent, and unconflicted form of life.

Life Spring Network

Appendix H: Character Strengths and Virtues

24. Gratitude – "Gratitude" is a sense of thankfulness and joy in response to receiving a gift, whether the gift be a tangible benefit from another person or a moment of peaceful bliss evoked by natural beauty. The word gratitude is derived from the Latin gratia, meaning "grace," "graciousness," or "gratefulness." All derivatives from this Latin root have to do with kindness, generousness, gifts, the beauty of giving and receiving, or getting something for nothing. Prototypically, "Gratitude" stems from the perception that one has benefited due to the actions of God or another person. There is an acknowledgment that one has received a gift and an appreciation of and recognition of the value of that gift. It would be unusual to say that one is grateful to oneself. Individuals with this strength would strongly endorse such statements as the following:

- It is important to appreciate each day that I am alive.
- I often reflect on how much easier my life is because of the efforts of others.
- For me, life is much more of a gift than it is a burden.
- One of my favorite times of the year is Thanksgiving.
- I am basically very thankful for the parenting that was provided to me.
- I could not have gotten to where I am today without the help of many people.
- It seems like I can even find reasons to feel thankful for bad things that happen.
- I have been so struck by the beauty or awe of something that I felt grateful in return.

A distinction can be made between personal and transpersonal gratitude. Personal gratitude is thankfulness toward a specific other person for the benefit that the person has provided (or just for their being). Transpersonal gratitude is gratefulness to God. The prototype of transpersonal gratitude is seen in the peak experience, a moment of overwhelming gratefulness. As a trait, gratitude is expressed as an enduring thankfulness that is sustained across situations and over time. Four components of gratitude are:

- A warm sense of appreciation for somebody or something
- A sense of goodwill toward that person or thing
- A disposition to act that flows from appreciation and goodwill
- A recognition of someone else's generosity

Spiritual Disciplines

Very few disciplines can be regarded as absolutely indispensable for a healthy life and work, though some are obviously more important than others. Practicing a range of activities that have proven track records across the centuries will help keep us from erring. Here is such a list grouped into Disciplines of Abstinence, God Engagement, God and Community Engagement, and Life and Wisdom Engagement:

Disciplines of Abstinence Disciplines of God Engagement 1. Solitude 9. Worship 2. Silence 10. Prayer 11. Meditation 3. Fasting 4. Simplicity 12. Singing 5. Chastity 13. Surrender 14. Study 6. Secrecy 7. Sacrifice 15. Pilgrimage 16. Sabbath 8. Watching (Vigil) **Disciplines of God Disciplines of Life** and Community Engagement and Wisdom Engagement

- 17. Teaching
- 18. Celebration
- 19. Service
- 20. Fellowship
- 21. Confession
- 22. Submission
- 23. Friendship Evangelism
- 24. Assembling
- 25. Hospitality
- 26. Intercessory Prayer

- 27. Journaling
- 28. Earning
- 29. Saving
- 30. Giving (including Tithe)
- 31. Frugality
- 32. Guidance
- 33. Retreat
- 34. Temperance
- 35. Planning
- 36. Exercise

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Disciplines of Abstinence:

To refrain voluntarily to some degree and for some time from the satisfaction of what we generally regard as normal and legitimate desires, including not only our basic drives or motivations, but also our desires for convenience, comfort, material security, reputation or fame. It is the best course for dealing with any habit or pursuit, harmless in itself, that is keeping us from God and sinking us deeper into the things of earth. According to Bishop Wilson of the Isle of Man, "Those who deny themselves will be sure to find their strength increased, their affections raised, and their inward peace continually augmented."

1. Solitude or "Quiet Time"

Solitude is the practice of being absent from other people and other things so that you can be present with God. It involves purposely abstaining from interaction with other human beings, denying ourselves companionship and all that comes from our conscious interaction with others; closing ourselves away by going to the ocean, desert, wilderness, or anonymity of the urban crowd; not just rest or refreshment from nature, but choosing to be alone and to dwell on our experience of isolation from other human beings.

It frees us, thus explaining its primacy and priority among the disciplines. It provides psychic distance, the perspective from which we can see, in the light of eternity, the created things that trap, worry, and oppress us. It is the gateway to fasting, prayer, service, giving, and celebration. It is, as a desert or closet, the primary place of strength for the beginners, as it was for Christ and for Paul. As Thomas a' Kempis states, "The great holy men, where they might, fled men's fellowship and chose to live to God in secret places."

But be warned that it carries the risk of cracking open and bursting apart the shell of our superficial securities. And it can pain and threaten our family and friends who need us to keep their lives in place and who may not understand why we retreat.

• Mark 1:35 "Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed."

2. Silence

Silence is shutting out sounds so we can hear God's voice and get to know Him better. It involves closing off our souls from "sound;" it goes beyond solitude and without it solitude has little effect; it is the way to make solitude a reality. But it can be frightening because it strips us as nothing else does, throwing us upon the stark realities of our life. In some cases it requires learning to rise for a time in the middle of the night. It also includes the practice of not speaking, providing us with a certain inner distance to consider our words fully and to control what we say and when we say it. It helps us to listen, to observe, and to pay attention to people. It helps us to live with a quiet, inner confidence.

3. Fasting

Fasting is purposely depriving yourself of things that can keep us from depending on God to meet our needs. It involves abstaining in some significant way from food and possibly from drink as well. Those who practice it have a clear and constant sense of their resources in God. It helps them endure deprivations of all kinds, even to the point of coping with them easily and cheerfully. It teaches temperance or self-control, moderation and restraint with regard to all our fundamental drives. It requires practice to be effective, since as beginners it consumes all our attention. Systematic fasting is used effectively as part of direct service to God, as in special times of prayer or other service.

- Esther 4:16 "...Do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. I and my maids will fast as you do. When this is done, I will go to the king..."
- Luke 5:35 "But the time will come when the bridegroom will be taken from them, in those days they will fast."

- Matthew 6:16-17 "And when you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by men. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward."
- Acts 13:3 "So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off. "

4. Simplicity

Simplicity is characterized by three attitudes (adapted from Foster in Celebration of Discipline): everything I have is a gift from God, everything I have will be taken care of by God, everything I have is available to others. Believing that God is the real owner of everything means that we have to share our goods with those God loves. Martin Luther once said, "If our goods are not available to the community, they are stolen goods" [quoted by Foster, p. 78]. The heart of simplicity is to have one goal, to be about one thing. What should that be? Jesus made it clear when he spoke in the Sermon on the Mount about our attitude toward food, clothes, and money. He said, "But seek first His Kingdom and His righteousness and all these things will be given to you as well" (Matthew 6:33). The one thing you need to desire is God's reign in your life and in the world, and all the small stuff like food and clothes will take care of themselves. Can we believe that? The book of Hebrews 13:5 says, "Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have." That is the simple life of contentment with whatever you have. But the verse goes on. Why should you be content? "Because God has said, 'Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you." God can be trusted. God will take care of you. You don't have to trust in uncertain riches. You don't have to trust in your own efforts, as if you were in this rat race all on your own. You don't have to fill your house with clutter or your accounts with cash in order to feel secure.

5. Chastity

Chastity means purposely turning away from dwelling upon or engaging in the sexual dimension of our relationships to others – even our husbands or wives. It is each of us learning how "to control his own body in a way that is holy and honorable" (1 Thessalonians. 4:4). It involves the practice of abstaining from sex and from indulging in sexual feelings and thoughts, and thus learning how not to be governed by them. Contrary to much modem thought, it is absolutely vital to the health of any marriage that sexual gratification not be placed at the center.

Although Chastity has an important part to play within marriage, its main effect is the proper disposal of sexual acts, feelings, thoughts, and attitudes within our life as a whole, inside of marriage and out. Sexuality cannot be allowed to permeate our lives if we are to live as children of God and brothers and sisters of Jesus Christ.

It does not mean non-sexuality, and any pose to that effect will certainly do great harm. The suffering that comes from sexuality does come in large part from improper indulgence in sexual thoughts, feelings, attitudes and relations. But much also comes from improper abstinence.

Paul's admonition that it is "better to marry than to burn with passion" (I Corinthians 7:9) is not just a trivial "inward" matter. It extends out into human life in many ways: severe distortion of thought and emotion, inability to engage in normal and appropriate sexual relations, disgust and hatred between frustrated men and women, even abuse of children and sexual perversion. Chastity rightly practiced as a part of an overall rich walk with God can draw the poison from sexual abstinence and prevent the sickness of heart and mind that now runs amok in the sexual dimension of life in today's world. As Bonhoeffer observed, "The essence of chastity is not the suppression of lust but the total orientation of one's life toward a goal."

Healthy abstention in chastity can only be supported by loving, positive involvement with members of the opposite sex. Alienation from them makes room for harmful lusts, and so this discipline must be underscored with compassion, association and helpfulness.

6. Secrecy

Secrecy means abstaining from causing our good deeds and qualities to be known; it is even taking steps to prevent them from being known; it helps us lose or tame the hunger for fame, justification, or just the mere attention of others. It is learning to love to be unknown and even accepting misunderstanding without the loss of our peace, joy, or purpose. It involves experiencing a continuing relationship with God that is independent of the opinions of others. It enables the tranquility of rising above "praisings and blamings." It is the opposite of thinking that our virtues need to be advertised to be known.

In one sense genuine faith and works cannot be hidden. Secrecy enables us to place our public relations department entirely in the hands of God. It encourages us to see our associates in the best possible light, even to the point of our hoping they will do better and appear better than we do. If you want to experience the flow of love as never before, the next time you are in a competitive situation, pray that the others around you will be more outstanding, more praised, and more used of God than yourself. Really pull for them and rejoice in their successes.

7. Sacrifice

Sacrifice is giving until it hurts and offering our life as a gift to God. It involves abstaining from the possession or enjoyment of what is necessary for our living; it is contrasted with frugality, which gives up things that in some degree are superfluous anyway, in that it forsakes the security of meeting our needs with what is in our hands; it is total abandonment to God, a stepping into the darkened abyss, in the faith and hope that God will bear us up.

8. Watching (Vigil)

Watching means abstinence from sleep while seeking to watch and wait upon the Lord obediently in prayer and intercession for God's will to be done.

- Luke 6:12 "One of those days Jesus went out into the hills to pray, and spent the night praying to God."
- Psalm 130:6 "My soul waits for the Lord, more than watchmen wait for the morning..."
- Psalm 27:14 "Wait for the Lord; be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord."
- Luke 22:45-46 "When he rose from prayer and went back to the disciples, he found them asleep, exhausted from sorrow. 'Why are you sleeping?' he asked them. 'Get up and pray so that you will not fall into temptation.'"
- Colossians 4:2 "Be persevering in your prayers and be thankful as you stay awake to pray."
- Luke 12:37 "It will be good for those servants whose master finds them watching when he comes..." [watching here, and in the next verse, is used figuratively.]
- Mark 13:36-37 "If he comes suddenly, don't let him find you sleeping. What I say to you, I say to everyone: 'Watch!'"

Engagement of God Disciplines

These disciplines balance the disciplines of abstinence (the outbreathing and inbreathing of our spiritual lives) by entering into action. Abstinence counteracts tendencies to sins of commission, while engagement counteracts tendencies to sins of omission. Abstinence makes way for engagement. These disciplines focus on helping us to engage God in relationship.

9. Worship

Worship is finding ways to tell God all that He is worth to you. It is more than music. It is a lifestyle. It means engaging ourselves with, dwelling upon, and expressing the greatness, beauty, and

goodness of God through thought and the use of words, rituals, and symbols. It is doing this alone as well as in union with God's people. It is seeing God as worthy, ascribing great worth to Him. Worship is the engagement of one's entire being with the greatness of the God Who Is. Worship is a life of conversation with God. God speaks, we respond, God responds, we respond again. Worship involves listening, looking, tasting, feeling, and smelling. We breathe in the presence of God wherever we are. We inhale the memories of His faithful acts in the past. Just as we suffocate for lack of air, worship suffocates for lack of attentiveness to God's presence and faithfulness. Worship is our response to who God is. As we meditate on God's nature and character through prayer and study, the Holy Spirit reveals who God is more and more fully. As we experience who God is and what He is like, we give Him more worth in our lives. This is what the worshippers in Revelation 4-5 are doing. The more we come to understand who God is, the more we desire to open our lives up to the change that He desires in us. Paul wrote, "Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind." It is in this way that true worship is transformational (Romans 12:2).

10. Prayer

Prayer is communicating with God to help us know God, hear from God, express dependence on God and engage with Him in accomplishing His purposes in the world. It is engaging by conversing or communicating with God. It has its greatest force in strengthening the spiritual life only as we learn to pray without ceasing. It will not be established in our lives, as it must be for us to flourish, unless we are practicing other disciplines such as solitude and fasting. Very few people actually succeed in attaining spiritual richness through prayer alone and indeed often find it to be intolerably burdensome. Examples of Charles Finney and others who are especially effective at prayer are often held up without presenting their commitments to a blend of spiritual disciplines. It is the combination of experiences that give the greatest power.

- 1 Peter 4:7 "The end of all things is near. Therefore be clear-minded and self-controlled so that you can pray."
- Ephesians 6:18 "Pray all the time, asking for what you need, praying in the Spirit on every possible occasion. Never get tired of staying awake to pray for all the saints."
- Acts 1:14 "By common consent these...devoted themselves to prayer."
- Deuteronomy 4:7 "...The Lord our God is near us whenever we pray to him..."
- 1 Thessalonians 5:17,19 "Never stop praying... Never dampen the fire of the Spirit."

11. Meditation

Christian meditation is listening, sensing, and heeding the life and light of Jesus Christ. Richard Foster puts it this way: "In the discipline of meditation we are not so much acting as we are opening ourselves to be acted upon. We invite the Holy Spirit to come and work within us – teaching, cleansing, comforting and rebuking. We also surround ourselves with the strong light of Christ to protect us from any influences not of God." Meditation gives us the wondrous and glorious opportunity to dwell completely on the goodness and perfection of our Lord. He wants you and me to be in communion with Him so that we can learn His will, realize His purpose, believe His promises, see His work and imitate His way for us.

- Psalm 1:1-2 "Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers. But His delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night."
- Psalm 119:97 "Oh, how I love your law! I meditate on it all day long."
- Psalm 48:9 "Within your temple, O God, we meditate on your unfailing love."
- Psalm 145:5 "...I will meditate on your wonderful works."
- Psalm 46:10 "Be still and know that I am God..."

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12. Singing

Through Singing one can praise God and be edified.

- Psalm 71:23 "My lips will shout for joy when I sing praise to you I, whom you have redeemed."
- Acts 16:25 "About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them."

Singing scripture, hymns and other songs helps to fill the mind with God's word. In Ephesians 5:18-19, Paul says that this is one way the Spirit fills us. When people sing, they're involved, even if in just reading lyrics or hearing accompaniment. One can't sing without taking part, so automatically the person is engaged in the act of praise or mourning. It then connects with the feelings, the thoughts, the history, the subconscious. It ingrains the lyric in the mind, so it is remembered when it's needed. It can be done anywhere at just about any time. Clap, sway, even air guitar. Do it alone; do it with close friends.

13. Surrender

Surrendering oneself to God means living in and through His strength in all we do. It involves trusting God's wisdom in giving us our lot in life and surrendering to His Guidance and power for living. It means trusting that His will will be done as we surrender, and that as we abide in the vine we will bear much fruit. Surrender is not something we do once and it's a done deal. It's a daily discipline we must practice. Our prideful self can rear its ugly head on the spur of the moment. We don't have to work at being self-righteous, but we have to be vigilant about being self-less. Humility doesn't come naturally to us, but it's essential if our lives are to be ones that aren't opposed to God. Surrendering to God daily makes our hearts available to be vessels for God's abundant life to live through us.

14. Study

Study is using any tools available to learn all we can about the truth of God's Word, engaging ourselves, above all, with the written and spoken Word of God. It is the chief positive counterpart of solitude, and the primary discipline of engagement. As Calvin Miller remarks: "Mystics without study are only spiritual romantics who want relationship without effort." It is devoting long periods of time to chewing over the assurances and promises in the Bible. It is not only reading, hearing and inquiring, but also meditating on what comes before us. The scriptures are the comprehensive equipment of the man of God, and fit him fully for all branches of his work.

- Acts 17:11 "... They searched the Scriptures day by day to check up on Paul and Silas' statements to see if they were really so."
- 1 Thessalonians 5:21 "But test everything that is said to be sure it is true, and if it is, then accept it."
- Matthew 7:7 "Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you."
- Hebrews 11:6 "...The man who approaches God must have faith in two things, first that God exists and secondly that God rewards those who search for him."
- 2 Timothy 3:16-17 "All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching the faith and correcting error, for resetting the direction of a man's life and training him in good living."

15. Pilgrimage and Sabbatical

The idea of sacred motion or travel runs deep in human religion, dating back to when early humans would climb hilltops to be closer to God or the sky, or go to a specific spot to dance around in circles. One of the many great spiritual discoveries of Judaism is that we are all pilgrims, strangers seeking God. Even God's chosen had to wander the wilderness to get their souls right. Spiritual talk is full of the language of travel: walking the walk,

leaving behind and stepping forward, processing and recessing (that is, moving in and out) from worship services, the way of Christ and wandering from that way, or following God's paths on our spiritual journey of life. And overall, we still haven't truly found what we're looking for or moving toward. Pilgrimage is a way God gives us to answer that yearning to travel physically to discover God and the truth about ourselves. By going to a place where God and God's own have moved mightily in the past, it sinks in that God really does exist and really is at work among us. Trusting that, we can search for (and be eager for) what God is doing within us right now. The pilgrimage, done out of devotion and true eagerness, lets us answer a yearning to be intimate with God and sends wisdom to soul and mind. It helps set aside our doubts and make our surrender to God more whole-hearted. In that way, it turns us into truer disciples of Christ and gives us a purer sense of mission and purpose. The most common effect of a pilgrimage is that it solidifies something that is growing within you. Perhaps you're doubting what you're doing now with your life: the pilgrimage may end that doubt, or may give it shape so that you can change course with confidence.

16. Sabbath

"Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy", says one of the Ten Commandments. The sabbath is one day every week, a time set aside for not working, but resting, and for attending to one's faith in God. In our daily living in this world, we can get tricked into measuring our own value and those around us by what we accomplish, either in quality or quantity. But neither quality nor quantity are the measure of a person. We are evaluated by a different measure, the one a loving God uses on God's children. Sabbath is not a time for running away, but for regaining perspective, and taking the time for worship of the One on whom our value depends, and being with others who are doing the same thing.

Engagement of God and Community Disciplines

The purpose of these disciplines is to balance the disciplines of abstinence (the outbreathing and inbreathing of our spiritual lives) by entering into action. Abstinence counteracts tendencies to sins of commission, while engagement counteracts tendencies to sins of omission. Abstinence makes way for engagement. These disciplines focus on helping us to engage in our relationship with God and building contagious Christian community.

17. Teaching

We are called to teach and admonish one another with all wisdom. Engaging in the discipline of teaching usually benefits the teacher more than the student. Christianity is a reproductive faith and we are all called as the priesthood of all believers to engage in the teaching and instruction of other believers. God's plan is to create discipleship chains where we are linked together and called to instruct one another in godliness. The more mature are to teach the younger in the power of the Holy Spirit. This is where you regularly move out in the guidance and power of the Spirit to teach others how to live their faith.

 Hebrews 5:12-14 "You have been believers so long now that you ought to be teaching others. Instead, you need someone to teach you again the basic things about God's word. You are like babies who need milk and cannot eat solid food. For someone who lives on milk is still an infant and doesn't know how to do what is right. Solid food is for those who are mature, who through training have the skill to recognize the difference between right and wrong."

18. Celebration

Celebration is focusing on God's work in the world and in your life. You draw joy and strength as you recognize God's faithfulness in your life. Celebration helps us concentrate on our life and world as God's work and as God's gift to us. It typically means that we gather with others who know God to eat and drink, to sing and dance, and to relate stories of God's action for our lives

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Appendix I: Spiritual Disciplines

and our people. It involves holy delight and joy as the great antidote to despair and a wellspring of genuine gratitude. It is a discipline of faith to seize the season of enjoyment and embrace it for what it is, just as there are also times to weep. We dishonor God as much by fearing and avoiding pleasure as we do by dependence upon it or living for it. It sometimes involves a delirious joy coursing through our bodily being, when we really see how great and lovely God is and how good he has been to us. Celebration heartily done makes our deprivations and sorrows seem small, and we find in it great strength to do the will of our God because His goodness becomes so real to us. Richard Foster put it this way: "Celebration is central to all the Spiritual Disciplines. Without a joyful spirit of festivity the Disciplines become dull, death-breathing tools in the hands of modern Pharisees.'

19. Service

Service is humbly giving of yourself and expecting nothing in return. It is engaging our goods and strength in the active promotion of the good of others and the cause of God in our world. Not all acts of service are done as disciplines. We do them without regard to how it may enhance our abilities to follow Christ. But we may also serve another to train ourselves away from arrogance, possessiveness, envy, resentment or covetousness. Paradoxically, perhaps, service is the high road to freedom from bondage to other people. In it, as Paul realized, we cease to be "people pleasers" and "eye servants," for we are acting unto God in our lowliest deeds. This includes the discipline of working hard to accomplish physical tasks that serve others' needs and maintain the resources that God has put under our stewardship. This could be anything from household chores to landscaping or service projects like Habitat for Humanity. Service is even more important for Christians who find themselves in positions of influence, power and leadership than for those who out of necessity must serve. Matthew 20:25-28 is not an instruction on how to become great, but a statement on how those who are great are to behave. It is striving to

meet all persons who cross our path with openness to service for them – not, of course, in any anxious, overly solicitous manner, but with ease and confidence born of our vision of our lives together in the hands of God.

20. Fellowship

Fellowship is being with others in ways that help us grow in our faith. It is engaging in common activities of worship, study, prayer, celebration, and service with other disciples, either in a large group or with only a few. It is living out the "one anothers" of Scripture in Covenant Community with other brothers and sisters in Christ. 1 Corinthians 12:12 states, "The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body." Why do we need other people? Because we don't have everything we need. I can't be a whole person without you. In His wisdom, God has not given any of us everything we need; instead, He chose to give us one another. I have gaps, you have gaps - we fill each other's gaps. I know Jesus loves me because you love me. We are indispensable parts of one another. Together, we make up the whole.

21. Confession

Confession is telling the truth about what we've done and admitting our responsibility so we can experience true forgiveness. It is letting trusted others, within the related discipline of fellowship, know our deepest weaknesses and failures. We lay down the burden of hiding and pretending, which normally takes up such a dreadful amount of human energy. Unconfessed sin is a special kind of burden or obstruction in the psychological as well as the physical realities of the believer's life. Confession removes that burden. It helps us avoid sin. Closeness and confession force out evildoing. The awesome God we worship is eager to forgive us, as is revealed in the words of Psalm 103:12 "As far as the east is from the west, so far does God remove my sin." With these words, He offers us a guilt-free existence. But without acknowledging our sins before God and depending on His mercy to help us change, guilt and shame can constantly plague us. Confession and forgiveness are realities

that transform us, and they are a means of healing and transformation for the inner spirit.

22. Submission

Submission is giving up our way in favor of someone else's. It means engaging at the highest level of fellowship in acts of humility, complete honesty, transparency, and at times confession and restitution. Redemptive communities do not promote iron hierarchies in which unwilling souls are crushed and driven. Submission is engaging the experience of those in our fellowship who are qualified to direct our efforts in growth, and who then support us with the added weight of their wise authority. These "wise" people do not look at themselves primarily as leaders but as examples of servanthood. It is a case of true leadership, not the drivership that so often prevails in secular society and in some church groups where those "in control" do not know an alternative. It is important to realize that submission is something, perhaps the only thing, that can strengthen us to overcome the sin of pride, which is the worst of all sins and the source of all others. Submission means the freedom to give way to others. Submission is the opposite of self-indulgence. Paradoxically, though, self-denial has the effect of leading to self-fulfillment. "If anyone would be first, he must be last of all and servant of all." Submission is an ethical imperative for all Christians: men as well as women, fathers as well as children, masters as well as slaves. The duty of submission, however, has its limits. Sometimes, those limits are clear (such as Peter's refusal to stop preaching the risen Christ). Usually, the limits are not clear (such as the extent to which one should submit to a corrupt and wicked government). Submission is in some ways the concurrent motivation for the discipline of service.

23. Friendship Evangelism

This is the discipline of relationship excellence. It involves relating to people with God's grace and truth. This is especially important for those who are not walking in relationship with God and do not have a perspective of what God's love looks like. We become living examples of God's love to them as we learn from the Lord and allow God's Spirit to live and love others through us. It has been said that our lives are the only Bible most people will ever read, so how we build friendships with people far from God is important if they are going to understand the great love that the Father has for them. The apostle Paul believed that the greatest privilege is to be chosen by God for salvation, and the second greatest privilege is to help someone else experience the same salvation. Paul believed that all people need a Savior and that there is no way to heaven except through Jesus Christ. If you want to have an effective discipline of evangelism, believe what Paul believes. Evangelism is taking people as far as they want to go toward Jesus. Although all Christians are not expected to use the same methods of evangelism, all Christians are expected to evangelize. Godliness requires that we discipline ourselves in the practice of evangelism. The reason many of us don't witness in effective ways is our lack of discipline.

24. Assembling

When we meet together as the body of Christ we can exhort one another. "I rejoiced with those who said to me, 'Let us go to the house of the Lord.'" (Psalm 122:1) "And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another – and all the more as you see the Day approaching" (Hebrews 10:24-25). This is where we commit to gathering with the covenant community and making the gathering of God's family a priority in our lives. God moves in and through community, and we are better able to discern God's will for our community and move out together when the family is called together. This is an important discipline because the priesthood of all believers comes alive only when we gather under the Lordship of Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit and seek the will of the Father together.



25. Hospitality

Hospitality means showing kindness to friends and strangers, which often results in blessing. "Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing some people have entertained angels without knowing it" (Hebrews 13:2). Sharing meals or drinks, particularly with people who are different, can be a deeply communal experience. Just as Jesus ate and drank with tax collectors and sinners, we develop community when we are open to our neighbors, wherever they live. Hospitality can be shared at home or in other places, and it can also be important to accept the hospitality of others. At the heart of hospitality is mutuality in learning to give and receive. When sharing together we have opportunity to engage others, to hear their stories and their life experiences, to discover the holiness of the others, and to know ourselves gifted by God's presence in the sharing. Hospitality – from simple acts of kindness to challenges to our nation's immigration and refugee policies by churches offering sanctuary - involves faithful acts in response to God's hospitality freely offered to us. Working to ensure shelter, employment, education, and health care for all God's people is part of the work of hospitality. Offering hospitality is a moral imperative. The expectation is that God's people are people who will welcome strangers and treat them justly.

26. Intercessory Prayer

Intercessory prayer is not the same as prayers for yourself, or for 'enlightenment', or for spiritual gifts, or for guidance, or any personal matter, or any glittering generality. Intercession is not just praying for someone else's needs. Intercession is praying with the real hope and real intent that God would step in and act for the positive advancement of some specific other person(s) or other entity. It is trusting God to act, even if it's not in the manner or timing we seek. God wants us to ask, even urgently. It is casting our weakness before God's strength, and (at its best) having a bit of God's passion burn in us. "I commend intercessory prayer, because it opens man's soul, gives a healthy play to his sympathies, constrains him to feel that he is not everybody, and that this wide world and this great universe were not after all made that he might be its petty lord, that everything might bend to his will, and all creatures crouch at his feet" (Charles Spurgeon).

Engagement of Life and Wisdom Disciplines

These disciplines balance the disciplines of abstinence (the outbreathing and inbreathing of our spiritual lives) by entering into action. Abstinence counteracts tendencies to sins of commission, while engagement counteracts tendencies to sins of omission. Abstinence makes way for engagement. These disciplines focus on helping us to engage in our relationship with God and live wise, fruitful lives.

27. Journaling

This discipline involves keeping a spiritual diary where you write out your prayers and thoughts, and record what you hear God saying to you. Devotional journals have been everything from a child writing down her daily thoughts about God in a notebook, to complex systematic projects with structured Bible passages and discipline exercises and such. Dan Phillips calls it simply "a written record of personal reactions to spiritual matters." The key thing about a journal is that it's a place to share yourself spiritually with God and with yourself. You're pouring your thoughts out to God, but you're also part of the audience, because you go back to it to see how you've spiritually grown – or perhaps shrunk. Journaling, although not commanded in Scripture, is certainly modeled there. God has blessed the use of journals since biblical times. The Spiritual Discipline of Journaling has a fascinating appeal to many people. It not only promotes spiritual growth but is a valuable aid to many other aspects of the spiritual life. Although there are no rules for keeping a journal and journaling can be fruitful at any level of involvement, journaling requires persistence through the dry times. Its value can be experienced only through doing it.

28. Earning

A diligent Earner is someone who works with commitment, purpose, and a grateful attitude. Earning is working purposefully to earn resources that can support your family and others financially. The Scriptures constantly speak of the importance of working to earn a wage and support our immediate relatives and beyond as we have the ability to do so "Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men" (Colossians 3:23). "If anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for his immediate family, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever" (1 Timothy 5:8). "You may say to yourself, 'My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me.' But remember the Lord your God, for it is He who gives you the ability to produce wealth" (Deuteronomy 8:17-18).

29. Saving

The wise saver is one who builds, preserves, and invests with discernment. This is purposefully living on less than you earn in order to save for future needs. It is wise to save for an unexpected hardship but foolish to stockpile things for beyond our need. So there is a difference between saving and hoarding. Saving must be guided by God in order to learn the principle of "enoughness.

30. Giving (Including Tithing)

A generous giver is someone who gives with an obedient will, a joyful attitude, and a compassionate heart. Giving in this fashion pleases God and enters us into His blessing. "And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased" (Hebrews 13:16). "In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: 'It is more blessed to give than to receive'" (Acts 20:35). This is also known as the discipline of money, or the tithe, in which we obediently give a definite portion of our annual income to the promotion of Christ's cause in the world. The tithe is used as the minimum training discipline for giving, but moves beyond ten percent as God guides us as to what we should give as a regular discipline from our income to His work in the world.

31. Frugality

Frugality is abstaining from using money or goods at our disposal in ways that merely gratify our desires or our hunger for status, glamour or luxury. It means that we stay within the bounds of what general good judgment would designate as necessary for the kind of life to which God has led us. It is the opposite of frivolous consumption which corrupts the soul away from trust in, worship of, and service to God, and which injures our neighbors as well. It is freedom from the spiritual bondage caused by financial debt, which in turn diminishes our sense of worth, dims our hope for the future and eliminates our sensitivity to the needs of others. This includes the importance of cleaning and maintaining the resources God has put under our stewardship in order to gain the maximum use out of them.

32. Guidance (Counseling, Life Coaching)

This is the discipline of seeking and giving guidance to others in and through counseling and mentoring relationships. In these roles you are seeking to discern God's wisdom for life. The discipline of seeking guidance goes to the heart of walking with God. Guidance involves our hearing God's voice and obeying Him. Seeking guidance is not only trying to find His will in a specific matter, but it is a constant way of life. God provides guidance to His people in two ways. One is individual guidance, where God gives each of His children divine instruction through Scripture, reason, circumstances, and the prompting of the Spirit in the individual's heart. In corporate guidance, God guides groups of people who gather in fellowship to seek the will of God. Both means of guidance are important to submit to as we seek to live in response to the voice of God.



33. Retreat

If 'quiet time' is a daily spiritual need, then there may be times when a longer stretch of solitude may be needed. For that, there is the 'retreat'. This is done by going to a specific place away from where you live and work, away from hobbies and duties, families and habits, media and pressures. It can be done totally alone, with just a spiritual director or sponsor, or with a small group of people who have a common purpose or bond. It works because it involves thorough separation from life as you know it for more than just a few minutes a day. This gives you a chance to step outside of your entire way of life for a little while and see it from a different angle. The retreat time can help you get back in touch with parts of yourself that have been bypassed in daily life for the sake of efficiency or to avoid pain. It can be a time of extended discussion with God, of throwing forth thoughts and feelings, working things out, being still and waiting on the Lord. A retreat may well refresh us with rest, but if that's all the 'retreat' is, then it's just another vacation. The spiritual retreat is time spent with God.

34. Temperance

Temperance" is mentioned four times in the King James Version of the New Testament. Each time it translates the Greek egkrateia, which means self-control, the virtue of one who masters his desires, his passions, and especially his sensual appetites. Egkrateia comes from the Greek root egkrates which is translated "temperate" and means to have power over, to master, to control, to restrain. The dictionary broadens our perspective on the subject of "temperance" by defining it as the avoidance of extremes of opinion, feeling or personal conduct. It stresses control and restraint not only over our behavior and personal conduct but also over the expression of our opinions in words and actions. Galatians 5:22-23 lists the nine fruit of the Spirit and verse 23 lists the final two, "Meekness, temperance (egkrateia); against such there is no law." The Amplified Bible says,

"...self-control (self-restraint, continence). Against such things there is no law "Temperance or the control of self depends upon the believer's resolve to establish boundaries for his behavior, actions, and thought processes; it is centered in the decision to exert his will over the desires, drives, and emotions of the body and the mind. This resolve must be accompanied with surrender to the power of God's Spirit to enable temperance, for temperance is a Fruit of the Spirit. Becoming successful in the fruit of temperance depends upon the strength of will to carry out one's decisions, wishes, or plans in the power of the Holy Spirit. Exercising the fruit of temperance enables us to live our lives purposefully and resolutely in agreement with the Word of God. In I Corinthians 10:23 (Amplified translation) the Apostle Paul wrote, "All things are legitimate [permissible – and we are free to do anything we please], but not all things are helpful (expedient, profitable, and wholesome). All things are legitimate, but not all things are constructive [to character] and edifying [to spiritual life]." Each one of us must define the boundaries of our life, what is and is not acceptable behavior. A boundary is a statement that defines a border or limit, a line that we discipline ourselves in the power of the Spirit not to cross. The most profitable place to ascertain wholesome boundaries for our life is the Word of God. The Word instructs the believer in the qualities that promote a sound and healthy character. And temperance, or self control, is a necessary ingredient for successful character building. Paul wrote in I Corinthians 6:12 (Amplified), "...Everything is lawful for me, but I will not become the slave of anything or be brought under its power." Temperance includes moderation in the enjoyment of food and drink. Sobriety is moderation in the use of intoxicating drink. Eating disorders such as Anorexia and Bulimia are very common in our time, causing cycles of starving or binging and purging, and swinging between food related anxiety, depression, and guilt and the pursuit of sensory pleasure in food "addiction." It is important to build the disciplines of temperance in eating and drinking wisely according to a plan for your physical health.

35. Planning (Life Stewardship)

Life is a gift that we are responsible to steward with the decisions that we make until we die. This involves spending time seeking wisdom as to how we should steward your life from God's perspective by discerning and synthesizing how you sense God leading you to invest your life strategically. This is best done according to a personal-growth and life-investment plan. This plan is not intended to be inflexible, but rather flexible as you sense the Holy Spirit leading and guiding you. This God-discerned plan gives you a structure within which God can continue to speak and guide you toward His preferred future.

36. Exercise (Physical Activity)

This is the discipline of exercising and engaging in physical activity or exertion in order to grow and maintain a healthy body. God in His wisdom made us fleshly creatures and gave us bones, muscles, and metabolic systems with which to serve Him. According to 1 Corinthians 6:19-20, our physical bodies are the very temple of God; we are not our own possession. Our body is God's creation and God's possession. We need to take care of His possession through good physical disciplines – exercise, diet, sleep and medical care. Exercise is a physical release that helps to cleanse us of toxins and stress that get built up in our bodies. Having a regular plan for exercise and changing it from time to time is a good discipline that brings health and other benefits to our lives.

Conclusion

Remember, the disciplines that must be central to our lives will be determined by the chief sins of commission and omission that entice or threaten us from day to day. Pride, envy, wrath, sloth, greed, gluttony, and lust – the seven "deadly" sins of theological and literary history – along with many others, are not phantoms or jokes but hard-bitten realities whose dreadful effects can be viewed hour by hour. They call for a comparably hard-nosed, tough response on our part, supported by infinite grace.

These definitions have been adapted and compiled from a variety of sources including the books listed below.

Here are some books on the spiritual disciplines that you may find helpful.

Foster, Richard, Celebration of Discipline

Ortberg, John, The Life You've Always Wanted

Peterson, Eugene, A Long Obedience in the Same Direction

Whitney, Donald, *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life*

Willard, Dallas, The Spirit of the Disciplines

Here are some classic books on spiritual disciplines.

Murray, Andrew, *The Inner Chamber* Lewis, C.S., *Mere Christianity* Bonhoeffer, Dietrich, *The Cost of Discipleship* Bunyan, John, *The Pilgrim's Progress* Chambers, Oswald, *My Utmost for His Highest* St. Ignatius, *The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius*



Life Spring

	Very Definite/ Always (4)	Sure/ Usually (3)	Think So/ Sometimes (2)	Not Sure/ Seldom (1)	No Never (0)
Response to God's call to relate to and through Him by Grace:					
1. I believe Jesus is the 'Son of God,' that He died for me, rose again and there is no other way to God except through Him.					
2. There is a definite time when I asked God to come into my life and relate to me as my personal Savior and Lord.					
3. I have answered Christ's call to "repent and believe." I know my sins have been forgiven and feel assured of my salvation.					
4. I have publicly acknowledged Christ through baptism.					
5. I regularly draw upon God's power-filled Grace as I forgive others in my life who sin against me.					
6. I can clearly share the Gospel with others.					
7. I intentionally share the Gospel, in word and deed, with others on a regular basis in an effort to connect them to God through Jesus in the power of the Holy Spirit.					
8. I have tried to build a friendship and reach out to at least one non-Christian person over the last month.					
Page 1 Totals:					



Life Spring

	Very Definite/ Always (4)	Sure/ Usually (3)	Think So/ Sometimes (2)	Not Sure/ Seldom (1)	No Never (0)
Response to God's call to make it my goal to Glorify God with my life:					
1. I regularly attend worship services.					
2. I am willing to suffer, to lose all, or even to die for Christ.					
3. I have learned the importance of submission to God and I desire to submit to Him and His transformation process in my life so that He will be glorified in and through my life.					
4. I am committed to love and honor Christ at home, in my work, with my possessions, and in all my relationships.					
5. I consider myself to be someone who strives to experience and express love in all that I do.					
6. When encountering hardships and criticism, I am aware of the working of the Holy Spirit in my life.					
7. I am learning from my difficulties and finding rest in God's sovereignty.					
8. I understand that the purpose of the church is to accomplish the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20; Ephesians 3:10).					
9. I clearly show to those I live and work with my Christian commitment by my words, attitudes and actions in order to bear witness to God's glory.					
10. I am more concerned to win God's approval in what I do than to win the approval of others.					
Page 2 Totals:					





	Very Definite/ Always (4)	Sure/ Usually (3)	Think So/ Sometimes (2)	Not Sure/ Seldom (1)	No Never (0)
Response to God's call to Grow toward Christlikeness:					
1. I trust the Bible as God's Word and regularly spend time studying, meditating on and applying the truths of God's word to my life.					
2. I spend time daily seeking God through prayer including aspects of prayer like: Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, Praying for others, Praying for God's work in the world and Listening.					
3. I understand the need for Bible study, prayer, and attending church worship services as part of the growth process.					
4. I have prayed through and discerned goals for my personal spiritual development with the help of mentors.					
5. I have a God-discerned plan for my health and growth in most areas of my life.					
6. I have a clear understanding of "the abundant life" that Jesus desires and modeled for me.					
7. I clearly understand what it means to love God with all of my heart, soul, mind and strength, and I have a plan to grow in experiencing and expressing God's love.					
8. I have a clear understanding of the journey of transformation that God is inviting me to choose.					
9. I believe in the reality of evil in the world, and I understand how Satan resists God's work in bringing transformation in my life.					
10. I am seeking God's transformation in my life every day.					
11. I regularly practice basic Christian disciplines like prayer, Bible study, fellowship and worship, while adding new ones.					
12. I believe that the life I live trains me for the life I am going to lead, and I am committed to being trained in righteousness so that God will bear eternal fruit through my life.					
13. I am learning the importance of developing Godly inner character over the mere external observance of God's commands.					
14. I understand that growth towards Christlikeness requires ac- countability, process and perseverance, and I am committed toward this end.					
15. I do the daily planning, tracking, and evaluating of my time necessary to keep on track and growing.					
Page 3 Totals:					



Self-Evaluation Questionnaire



	Very Definite/ Always (4)	Sure/ Usually (3)	Think So/ Sometimes (2)	Not Sure/ Seldom (1)	No Never (0)
Response to God's call to serve in His Kingdom in divinely empowered ways:					
1. I understand what Scripture teaches me concerning my universal calling of servanthood to be a minister of com- passion.					
2. I understand my unique calling of servanthood and what Scripture teaches about the interdependent nature of serving in His kingdom.					
3. I understand what my spiritual gifts are and how God desires for me to serve Him.					
4. I model servant leadership/followership according to my giftedness.					
5. I depend upon God to meet my needs.					
6. I understand spiritual warfare and the resources that God has equipped me with to withstand the attacks of the evil one.					
7. I take an active part in serving in the life and ministries of the church.					
8. I am using the spiritual gifts and original abilities God has given me to build up others.					
9. I seek each week to encourage, help, or perform a kind deed to help those God brings my way.					
10. I am serving on ministry teams which utilize God's greatness in and through my life in concert with that of others.					
11. I am regularly experiencing how God shows up powerfully through servanthood.					
12. The Fruit of the Spirit (Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Gentleness and Self-control) is clearly seen in my life.					
Page 4 Totals:					





	Very Definite/ Always (4)	Sure/ Usually (3)	Think So/ Sometimes (2)	Not Sure/ Seldom (1)	No Never (0)
Response to God's call to do life together in Groups of Biblically functioning community:					
1. I meet regularly with other Christians for worship, fellowship, teaching, ministry, prayer and evangelizing our friends.					
2. I meet regularly with others in a small group to share our lives, pray for one another, explore the Scriptures, help each other grow and provide a safe place to be held accountable.					
3. As far as it depends on me I try to live in harmony and unity with other Christians, as God empowers me to demonstrate His love, acceptance and forgiveness.					
4. I am familiar with the "one anothers" of Scripture and strive to live them out in my relationships.					
5. I understand the Biblical concept of blessings and curses and the power that they have in my life.					
6. I regularly confess my sins to others, especially those whom I have sinned against.					
7. I am willing to lovingly confront sin in the life of another believer.					
Page 5 Totals:					





	Very Definite/ Always (4)	Sure/ Usually (3)	Think So/ Sometimes (2)	Not Sure/ Seldom (1)	No Never (0)
Response to God's call to live as a Good Steward of my life:					
1. I have a clear understanding of God's mission for my life.					
2. I understand life to be a gift from God that I am accountable to steward with the decisions that I make.					
3. I understand God's guidance as it pertains to financial stewardship and faithfully obey as a diligent earner, wise saver, generous giver, prudent consumer, and cautious debtor.					
4. I have sought out and feel like I understand God's perspective on my Passions, Upbringing, Resources, Personality, Original Abilities, Spiritual Gifts and Love Language.					
5. I understand how my beliefs are formed and how they influence my behavior.					
6. I feel like I am on a journey with God toward under- standing and realizing my life's potential.					
7. I understand the seven deadly sins and the opposing virtues that God encourages me to strive towards.					
8. I understand my sin tendencies and I am intentionally pursuing God's life-giving virtues in my life.					
9. I understand the impact of my upbringing and how the ways in which I have been nurtured impact my desires, feelings, thoughts and actions.					
10. I live my daily life according to the plan that I have discerned God wants me to live out.					
11. I regularly give at least a tenth of my income towards God's work.					
12. I submit my body to Christ's control in what I eat, in self-discipline and exercise, and in keeping morally pure.					
13. I let Christ's control come over what I read, hear, watch and think about.					
Page 6 Totals:					





	Very Definite/ Always (4)	Sure/ Usually (3)	Think So/ Sometimes (2)	Not Sure/ Seldom (1)	No Never (0)
Response to Christ's call to seek and share His Guidance:					
1. I recognize God at work in my personal life and in the world daily guiding people to do His will.					
2. I engage in regular mentoring relationships where I seek the guidance and wisdom of God through others.					
3. I engage in regular mentoring relationships where I offer the guidance and wisdom of God to others.					
4. I understand the role that attitude plays in my daily decision making and life experience.					
5. I understand what the Bible teaches about Godly attitudes toward life, and I habitually choose them to guide my life.					
6. I believe that my sinful nature combined with the influence of evil in the world co-conspire to lead me away from God and His abundant life for me.					
7. I have been trained to mentor others and help them mature in their faith using a Biblical growth process.					
8. I am able to discern between man's version of God's teaching and God's intention behind His Word.					
9. Over the past month I have helped to influence, encourage, disciple or train at least one other person to follow Jesus more fully.					
Page 7 Totals:					



LifeSpring

Tally	Page Total	4	3	2	1	0
Page 1 Totals - Grace - 32 Possible						
Page 2 Totals - Glorification - 40 Possible						
Page 3 Totals - Growth - 60 Possible						
Page 4 Totals - Gifts - 48 - Possible						
Page 5 Totals - Group - 28 Possible						
Page 6 Totals - Good Stewardship - 52 Possible						
Page 7 Totals - Guidance - 36 Possible						
Grand Total						
Final Score						

Score	Comments
223-296	Christ-centered – You are well on your way as a follower of Jesus, but keep on going! There are still important steps ahead of you.
149-222	Close to Christ – You have made some good progress as a follower of Jesus. But don't become a half-hearted follower. There is much more for you to do in some important areas of discipleship. The assistance of a mentor will definitely help you move towards Christ-centeredness.
75-148	Growing in Christ – You have made a beginning in some areas, but your following is still loose and distant. Jesus is calling you to follow Him more closely.
0-74	Exploring Christ – Your following is very weak at present. (Perhaps you are a New Christian or have not yet really started). Are you prepared to clearly answer Jesus call and become His disciple?

References and Acknowledgments

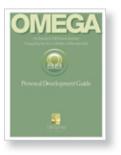
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Omega Course Resources











Omega Course Workbook

The Omega Workbook is a great way to follow along and take notes with the Omega sessions. You'll also find all of the graphics and descriptive charts that we use in the power point presentations. Included in this workbook is an extensive appendix filled with additional Scripture references and in-depth descriptions of various content found throughout Omega. Lastly, each session includes a set of reflective questions to help you process the information individually and with your group or mentor.

Omega Personal Development Guide

This guide complements your Course Workbook, takes you deeper into the Scriptures covered in the session and contains your homework. Each session branches out into three daily devotionals using the Scriptures found within each session of the Omega Course. This helps you absorb the content as you spend time reflecting on and applying each Scripture. The homework is designed to guide you towards creating your Personal Development Plan. Used in conjunction with the Omega Course Workbook and mentoring relationships, this guide helps you process and record God's wisdom and guidance for your life.

Omega C.O.R.E. Small Group LE.A.D.E.R.'s Guide

Take your group to a deeper level with the Omega C.O.R.E. Small Group L.E.A.D.E.R.'s Guide. Built on the four objectives found in every session of Omega, the Small Group Leader's Guide provides evaluation questions for you to gauge how your members are processing the material. Additionally, we provide ideas for methods and moments for sharing your own stories, personal mentoring questions, and learning experiences that can be done individually or as a group. Together, you'll move closer to realizing life's potential. This guide complements the Omega C.O.R.E. Small Group L.E.A.D.E.R. seminar.

Omega Course DVDs and Audio CDs

Watch or listen to the Omega Course at your convenience: in the kitchen, on the train, or even in the living room in your pjs (we won't tell). Supplement your live seminar experience and revisit sessions that you would like to see or hear again. You can also use these resources to run an Omega Seminar (one session) or the entire Omega Course (series of 24 sessions/seminars) for your own family, small group, church or organization. Life Spring Network

Omega Course Resources



The six-part Omega Course Workbook Series

We have created bite-sized workbooks to help you to introduce the Omega Course to your community four sessions at a time. Each workbook combines the content of the Omega Course Workbook and the Personal Development Guide so that the material for each session is all in one place. You can follow along and take notes, find all of the graphics and descriptive charts that we use in the power point presentations, and reference an extensive appendix filled with additional Scripture references and in-depth descriptions of various content found throughout Omega. Additionally each session contains four sections to aid you in maximizing your transformational journey: Omega Course Content, Discussion and Reflection Questions, Daily Devotionals and a Personal Development Plan/Homework.

Part 1 - Abundant Living - Sessions 1-4

Explore what the Scriptures say concerning Stewarding Life, Unpacking Mission, Abundant Living and the Seven Values of Abundant Living.

Part 2 - Biblical Humanity - Sessions 5-8

Explore what the Scriptures say concerning Our Core Identity, Being Fully Human, Essential Intimacy and Contagious Community.

Part 3 - Calling of Servanthood - Sessions 9-12

Explore what the Scriptures say concerning being Called to Serve, Stewarding Resources, Empowered to Serve and The Freedom of Servanthood.

Part 4 - Commit to Transformation - Sessions 13-16

Explore what the Scriptures say concerning the Journey of Transformation, Choosing to Transform, Resistance to Transformation and Blessings and Curses.

Part 5 - Know Thyself - Sessions 17-20

Explore what the Scriptures say concerning Realizing Life's Potential, Pressing into God's Purpose, the Power of Believing and the Seven Deadly Sins.

Part 6 - Running the Course - Sessions 21-24

Explore what the Scriptures say concerning the Joy of Discipline Godly Goal Setting, Aligning with God and Training for Abundant Living.

Online Community

Log onto the website to take part in the Life Spring Network online community. Read through our **blog** for thoughts, insights and ideas from Omega Trainers, Mentors and the Life Spring Network (LSN) Staff. Watch training videos, testimonials and read devotional thoughts. **Visit our resources section for free video, audio and material resources.** It's a great place to find recommended resources to take you deeper into various aspects of the Christian faith or to recommend to others you mentor.

Visit www.lifespringnetwork.org to get these and additional free resources which are designed to supplement and support your Omega Experience.

Omega Experience Resources











Leading the Omega Experience Conference

Over the course of this conference, you will be equipped to understand and implement the entire Omega Experience, from mentor and small group leader training, Pre-Omega and Post-Omega church-wide seminars, to facilitating the church-wide Omega Course and everything in between. This conference is a must for anyone aspiring to become a licensed Live Omega Course Trainer.

Omega Site Coordinator and Trainer Handbook

Everything you need to know to facilitate the Omega Experience in your own context. Role portraits help you to select just the right people for your Omega team. A full year planning checklist addresses all of the logistical needs. The Trainer Planning Guide comes with complete outlines, time frames, objectives, and follow-up learning experiences that will ensure a rich and full experience for all Omega participants. This handbook includes a resource disk with all 24 sessions of the Omega Course on PowerPoint and Keynote, in addition to the reproducible resources that you can use to track, personalize and promote your Omega Course.

Omega Mentoring and Life Coaching Handbook

This manual provides you with concepts, questions and strategies that will make your mentoring and life coaching truly transformational. Included are practical principles and coaching points for all of the major aspects of each session of the Omega Course. This guide is the distillation of our best mentoring paradigms, tools and training to aid you as a mentor and life coach of others.

Omega Course Leadership Training Seminars

Omega C.O.R.E. Small Group L.E.A.D.E.R. Seminar

Equip your small group leaders to help participants realize life's potential with Omega. This four-hour seminar gives your leaders a brief history and overview of Omega, shows them how to utilize the Small Group Leader's Guide for maximum effectiveness in facilitating their group and takes small group leadership to the next level with Life Spring Network's C.O.R.E. small group L.E.A.D.E.R. paradigm.

Omega Mentor Training Seminar

Start a mentoring movement in your own church or congregation by hosting or sending your leaders to this dynamic one-day seminar/retreat. Participants will dive into the deeper aspects of mentoring that include: The Power of Transformational Ministry, Principles of Mentoring and Coaching, and Mentoring Others Using the Omega Content.

Visit www.lifespringnetwork.org to get these and additional free resources which are designed to supplement and support your Omega Experience.













Additional Live Seminars

Pre-Omega Course Church-wide Seminars

The Mentoring Connection Seminar and Workbook

Life Spring Network, in conjunction with Arrow Leadership, offers a dynamic four-hour training seminar designed to equip and encourage people in the local church to intentionally invest in others through mentoring. In this seminar, you will explore models of mentoring and your role in this legacy ministry. Integrated into the workbook are 23 follow-through challenges to help you keep learning when the workshop is over.

Creating a Connection Culture Seminar and Workbook

Based on the book *Fired Up or Burned Out* co-authored by Jason Pankau, the Creating a Connection Culture Seminar will teach you how to create a connection culture for your church, ministry or business. In this practical and inspiring four-hour seminar, you will learn three key elements and two core elements that can empower you to transform even a lethargic, disconnected church, ministry or business into an impassioned, innovative, and thriving environment by unlocking the potential of your corporate Heart, Soul, Mind and Strength.

Post-Omega Course Church-wide Seminars

Empowered Servanthood Seminar and Workbook

This seminar is designed to help people better understand their unique call to servanthood, including understanding and identifying spiritual gifts and pursuing next-step ministry opportunities! More than just another Spiritual Gifts course, this one-day (eight-hour) seminar helps people understand their divine P.U.R.P.O.S.E. (Passions, Upbringing, Resources, Personality, Original Abilities, Spiritual Gifts and Experience with Love) and how we are created to serve one another. It further develops and expands the P.U.R.P.O.S.E. paradigm introduced in the Omega Course and personalizes the application. This material is perfect for weekend retreats or a multiple-session class format.

Making Cent\$ Seminar and Workbook

This seminar is designed to help people achieve financial freedom from God's perspective. This seminar examines what the Scriptures say about money and money management in the areas of earning, saving, giving, borrowing, consuming, budgeting and investing. It then translates that knowledge into wisdom and helps people develop a personal financial plan for stewarding the resources entrusted to them. This four-hour seminar can easily be taught on a Saturday morning or Sunday afternoon after regular church services.

U.N.I.T.Y. in Marriage Seminar and Workbook

This seminar is designed to help you build a marriage that experiences and expresses the love of God. This seminar examines what the Scriptures say about marriage and uses the U.N.I.T.Y. in Marriage paradigm to help couples build a Godly foundation for their marriage. This material is perfect for weekend retreats or a multiple-session class format.

Visit www.lifespringnetwork.org for more information or to schedule a live seminar for your church, organization or group today.

OMEGA Next Step Survey

Date	
Name	
Street Address	
City	State Zip Code
Phone number	
E-mail	

The Omega Course was designed to get you started on a dynamic and focused journey with God. During this course you were probably introduced to some topics that you would like to study further, in order to take the next step in your life development plan. Using the Life Focus Process, the Identity Roles Diagram and The 18 Laws of Life Stewardship, think back through the course and try to identify topics that you would like to pursue as next step learning opportunities. This information will help your mentor and/or the adult education director at your church help you take your next steps with God.

Circle any topics that interest you below or add your own on the blank lines.

7 Deadly Sins	Godly Attitudes	Perspective
7 Values of Abundant Living	Godly Friendship	Physical Health
Being Human	Godly Guidance	Prayer
Biblical Community	Leading Omega	Service Projects
Church History Study	Love Languages	Sharing your Faith
Church Leadership	Marriage	Small Group Leadership
Church Membership	Mentoring	Spiritual Disciplines
Committing to Transformation	Ministry Teams	Spiritual Gifts
Committing Your Life to Christ	New Testament	Spiritual Warfare
Cross-Cultural Missions	Old Testament	The Belief Model
Discipline	Parenting	Time Management
Divine Healing	Passions	Upbringing
Financial Stewardship	Personality	Your Profession
Goal Setting	Promises of God	Your Soul Care



For more resources, thoughts, and discussion about this session, please visit www.lifespringnetwork.org

OMEGA

Life Spring Network

OMEGA Next Step Survey

Please write down any next step thoughts or ideas that God has been bring to mind that you need to share with people in your Mentoring Network.