

# Running the Course Sessions 21-24



# COURSE WORKBOOK – PART VI

#### Life Spring Network Author and Primary Trainer of The Omega Course

#### **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.<sup>2</sup>, Life Focus Process, 7 G's © 2008, Life Spring Network, Inc.

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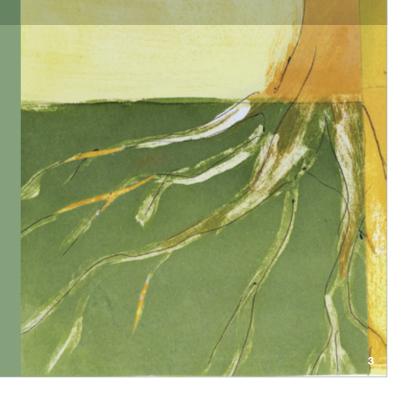




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# Introduction



# Introduction

# Welcome to the Omega Course!

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 ( $\Omega$ )!

#### What to Expect

- 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.



1 July

# Welcome to Part Six - Sessions 21-24

Each Session contains four sections to aid you in maximizing your transformational journey.

#### **During the Course** Section I: Omega Course Content

The Omega Course Content contains the key scriptures, paradigms, teaching notes and space to write down your insights for each session.

#### Section II: Discussion and Reflection Questions

At the end of each session are a list of discussion and reflection questions to guide you group interaction and help you reflect on what you are learning.

#### The Personal Development Plan

Between sessions, the final two sections 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!

#### **Section III: Daily Devotional**

Personal Development Guide. This guide is designed to be a powerful supplement to your journey through Omega. Inside you will find:

Spend three days a week going deeper with the Scriptures found in or related to each session of Omega. Each day provides you with:

#### **Context:**

The context of the Omega Course where the Scripture is located.

#### **Preparation:**

An aspect of God's character to spend a moment pondering or reflecting on.

#### **Meditation:**

The actual Scripture verse used in or related to the Omega session.



# Introduction

#### **Revelation:**

Three questions meant to spark your thoughts about the verse and how it intersects with your life.

#### **Application:**

Two suggestions of ways you might apply a concept or imperative found in the verse to your life for that day.

#### **Reflection:**

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A short prayer mirroring the verse or an idea in the verse. (Feel free to make your own!)

#### **Section IV: Personal Development Plan**

Be the co-author of your own personal development plan by completing your weekly homework assignments. Use this Guide when you meet with your mentor or life coach to fully maximize your journey and take one step closer to realizing life's potential in Christ!

You get out what you put in. You reap what you sow. Do the work and you will grow. 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

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

VII NIU NUN

I, \_\_\_\_\_, commit to seeking God's mission and guidance for my life over the course of my journey through Omega.

I understand that this is a C.O.R.E. decision to:

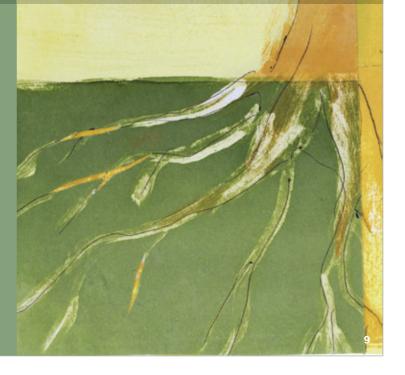
- 1. Commit to the journey and my group by staying current with the weekly session, including:
  - a. Attending each of the live sessions at my Omega site, or
  - b. Watching the course on DVD, by myself or with my small group, or
  - c. Listening to the teachings on CD, or
  - d. Watching the course on-line at www.lifespringnetwork.org
  - e. If applicable, attend the retreat days in my region or watch these sessions on DVD and work through the exercises on my own
- 2. Be Open to grow by:
  - a. Inviting the input and training of God through others in my group and through mentors that I will invite to help me along the way
  - b. Taking notes in my workbook and completing the homework for each session in my Omega Personal Development Guide

#### 3. <u>**R**</u>elate to the group by:

- a. Participating in the small and large group discussions and interacting with one another outside of the course
- b. 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>Enter into Scripture by:</u>
  - a. Working back through the Scriptures and paradigms in each session
  - b. Processing each session deeper by working through the three daily devotionals for each session in the Omega Personal Development Guide

#### Signed \_\_\_\_\_

We recommend that you engage in this journey in community. Who are some people who will walk with you in covenant community through this journey? Write their names below.



# 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)



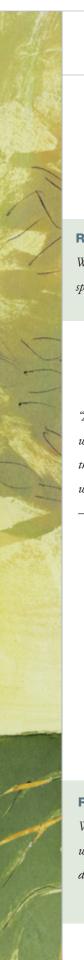


## Disciplines

# 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 speaks to you most?

"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. <sup>2</sup> 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. <sup>3</sup> Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart. <sup>4</sup> In your struggle against sin, you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood. <sup>5</sup> 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, <sup>6</sup> because the Lord disciplines those he loves, and he punishes everyone he accepts as a son." <sup>7</sup> 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! <sup>10</sup> 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. <sup>11</sup> 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. <sup>12</sup> Therefore, strengthen your feeble arms and weak knees. <sup>13</sup> 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 and
	local 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

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	Session 21: The Joy of Discipline	OMEGA
	<b>Disciplines of God and Community Engagement</b> (see definitions in the Appendix I) 17. Teaching	Life Spring Network
	<ol> <li>18. Celebration</li> <li>19. Service</li> <li>20. Fellowship</li> <li>21. Confession</li> </ol>	
	<ul><li>21. Contession</li><li>22. Submission</li><li>23. Friendship Evangelism</li><li>24. Assembling</li></ul>	
	25. Hospitality 26. Intercessory Prayer	
	<b>Disciplines of Life and Wisdom Engagement</b> (see definitions in the Appendix I) 27. Journaling	work.org
	<ul><li>28. Earning</li><li>29. Saving</li><li>30. Giving (Including Tithing)</li></ul>	www.lifespringnetwork.org
	<ul><li>31. Frugality</li><li>32. Guidance</li><li>33. Retreat</li><li>34. Temperance</li></ul>	session, please visit
	35. Planning 36. Exercise	discussion about this
		For more resources, thoughts, and discussion about this session, please visit www.l
Life Spring NETWORK		For more

#### **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. <sup>26</sup>Yes, Father, for this was your good pleasure. <sup>27</sup>All 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. <sup>28</sup>Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. <sup>29</sup>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. <sup>30</sup>For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

10

I solo

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.



OMEGA

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

#### Seven Spiritual Pathways<sup>17</sup>

(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

# -

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

#### 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.

#### The Seven Spiritual Pathways

#### Intellectual

Relational

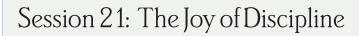
Serving

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



# Session 21: The Joy of Discipline - Discussion and Reflection

# **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?

#### Day 1

#### Context:

The Law of Discipline

#### Preparation:

The Lord as Authority

#### Meditation:

#### 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. <sup>2</sup> 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. <sup>3</sup> Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart. <sup>4</sup> In your struggle against sin, you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood. <sup>5</sup> 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, <sup>6</sup> because the Lord disciplines those he loves, and he punishes everyone he accepts as a son." <sup>7</sup> 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! <sup>10</sup> 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. <sup>11</sup> 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. <sup>12</sup> Therefore, strengthen your feeble arms and weak knees. <sup>13</sup> "Make level paths for your feet," so that the lame may not be disabled, but rather healed."

#### **Revelation:**

1. If there were one thing that the Lord would like you to "throw off" in your life, what would it be?

# Day 1

2. How does the example of Christ inspire you, especially in the light of the task and role of discipline in the spiritual life?

3. How do you see discipline facilitating holiness in your life?

#### Application:

1. Think about the joy set before Jesus. What is the source of this joy for Him? What is a source of true joy for you? Integrate something that brings you joy into your day today.

2. Use an image of Jesus to literally fix your eyes on today. Place it somewhere where you will see it multiple times today and prayerfully strive to discern any areas in which your life is out of alignment.

#### **Reflection:**

"Lord, you said, 'Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith.' Help me fix my eyes upon you and trust in your authority today."

# Day 2

**Context:** Disciplines of Abstinence

**Preparation:** The Lord as Deliverer

#### Meditation:

#### 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."

#### **Revelation:**

1. How would you explain 1 Corinthians 6:12 in your own words?

2. Practically speaking, how is it possible for us to be a part of "all things" but not to be brought under their power?

3. What difference does it make on a daily basis for you to take hold of the perspective found in 1 Peter 2:11?



# Day 2

#### **Application:**

1. If there were one thing in your life that you are "brought under the power" of, what would it be? Spend 10 minutes talking to God about this. What is He asking you to do so that you are more rightly relating to Him in that area?

2. Memorize 1 Peter 2:11. Keep the exhortation of the verse in the forefront of your mind as you go through the day. Did it change how you go about things in any way? Journal your thoughts at the end of the day.

#### **Reflection:**

"Lord, you said 'to live in this world as strangers and temporary residents.' Help me walk out my faith in you in this way today."

## Day 3

**Context:** Disciplines of Engagement

**Preparation:** The Lord as Purifier

#### Meditation:

#### 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."

#### **Revelation:**

1. How do you see the Disciplines of Engagement as a means to counter the struggle seen in these two passages?

2. How would you describe living "your whole life in the Spirit?" What are some of the things that we need as believers, to do this? How achievable do you think this is?

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# Day 3

3. How would you describe spiritual death? What are the possible warning signs that signal its approach?

#### Application:

1. Engage in one or more of the Disciplines of Engagement today to help you "live your whole life in the Spirit."

2. Think of someone you know who may be experiencing or moving toward "spiritual death." Commit to lifting this person up in prayer throughout the day. If possible, reach out to this person in some way.

#### **Reflection:**

"Lord, you said, 'Live your whole life in the Spirit.' Help me to live my whole life in your Spirit today."

### **Homework Session 21**

- 1. Journal through the discussion and reflection questions in your workbook.
- 2. Spend time journaling and reflecting upon the disciplines of abstinence and engagement, and the Holy Spirit's role in guiding you towards the right disciplines for your growth.
- 3. Spend time journaling about your spiritual pathways and how you can better connect with God by understanding your Characteristics, Strengths, Cautions and Ways to Stretch.
- 4. Using the definitions of the Spiritual Disciplines (Appendix I of your workbook) and your Weekly Compass, prayerfully strive to discern which spiritual disciplines God is challenging you to engage in by filling in the disciplines section of your weekly compass for each role.
- 5. Share these findings with a mentor and a member of your Inner Circle and ask them to help you apply what you are learning.

### Discussion and reflection questions journal:

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### Homework Journal - question #2

Homework Journal - question #3

### 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, 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 in 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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### **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 relationship 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
Member	Communion while consistently praying for and relating to our church family and engaging
Ivicilibei	in small group and local fellowship gatherings
Mentee/Mentor	Guidance, Study, Pilgrimage, Sabbatical and Submission while meeting regularly with
	mentors, counselors, and covenant community members; studying books, tapes, videos
	and through classes which help us grow; learning how to love and implement what we are
	learning into our lives; meeting regularly with others who seek us out for mentoring
Ambassador/	Friendship Evangelism and Hospitality through regular prayer for and connection with
Friend	friends 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
Compassion	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
Steward of	Simplicity, Frugality, Saving, Sacrifice and Giving/Tithing while stewarding God's resources
Resources	
Empowered	Teaching, Service, Sacrifice and Fellowship through the regular exercising of your spiritual
Servant	Ægifts while serving on ministry teams
Calling	Guidance, Study and Submission while meeting regularly with mentors; studying books,
Mentee/Mentor	tapes, videos and classes which help us grow in our task and relationship excellence. Also to
	meet regularly with others who seek us out for mentoring
Professional	Diligent Earner through faithful accomplishment of tasks; Friendship Evangelism through
	relationship excellence while serving as unto the Lord

# Session 22 Godly Goal Setting

# 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)**

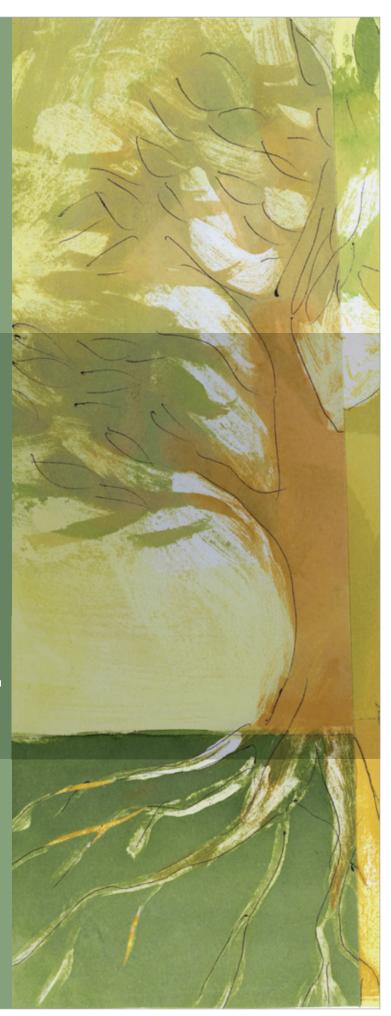
 Be motivated and not overwhelmed by having a workable process by which to gain momentum towards God's goals for your life.

#### **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.



# Session 22: Godly Goal Setting

### 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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# Session 22: Godly Goal Setting

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. <sup>13</sup> 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, <sup>14</sup> I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus. <sup>15</sup> 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. <sup>16</sup> Only let us live up to what we have already attained. <sup>17</sup> 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.

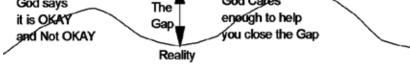


"Plans fail for lack of counsel, but with many advisers they succeed."

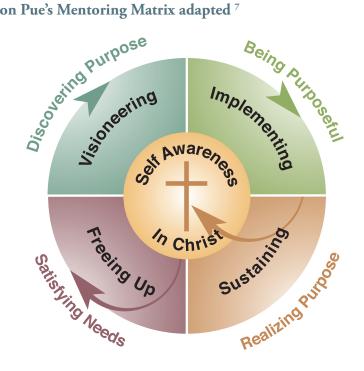
#### The Role of Mentoring in Charting the Course



Marriage / Friendships / Parenting / Talents / Finances / Work God's Vision for our lives - Perfection God Cares God says



#### Carson Pue's Mentoring Matrix adapted 7





# Session 22: Godly Goal Setting

#### 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

### Even if you have an aversion to setting goals, everyone needs focus.

**Goal Setting and Process** 

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."

#### **Reflective Question:**

In what way does writing down goals most help us?

### Habakkuk 2:2-3

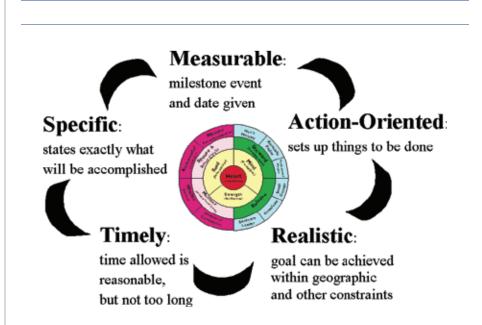
"Then the LORD replied: "Write down the revelation and make it plain on tablets so that a herald may run with it. <sup>3</sup> For the revelation awaits an appointed time; it speaks of the end and will not prove false. Though it linger, wait for it; it will certainly come and will not delay."





#### S.M.A.R.T. Goals<sup>18</sup>

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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# Session 22: Godly Goal Setting

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: <sup>2</sup> a time to be born and a time to die, a time to plant and a time to uproot, <sup>3</sup> a time to kill and a time to heal, a time to tear down and a time to build, <sup>4</sup> a time to weep and a time to laugh, a time to mourn and a time to dance, <sup>5</sup> a time to scatter stones and a time to gather them, a time to embrace and a time to refrain, <sup>6</sup> a time to search and a time to give up, a time to keep and a time to throw away, <sup>7</sup> a time to tear and a time to mend, a time to be silent and a time to speak, <sup>8</sup> a time to love and a time to hate, a time for war and a time for peace. <sup>9</sup> What does the worker gain from his toil? <sup>10</sup> I have seen the burden God has laid on men. <sup>11</sup> 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. <sup>12</sup> I know that there is nothing better for men than to be happy and do good while they live. <sup>13</sup> That everyone may eat and drink, and find satisfaction in all his toil – this is the gift of God. <sup>14</sup> 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. <sup>16</sup> Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers."

# Session 22: Godly Goal Setting

### 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. <sup>37</sup> For in just a very little while, "He who is coming will come and will not delay. <sup>38</sup> But my righteous one will live by faith. And if he shrinks back, I will not be pleased with him." <sup>39</sup> 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, <sup>2</sup> 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. <sup>3</sup> Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; <sup>4</sup> perseverance, character; and character, hope. <sup>5</sup> 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 Perseverance

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# Session 22: Godly Goal Setting - Discussion and Reflection

### **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?

### Day 1

**Context:** The Law of Growth

**Preparation:** God as Steadfast

#### Meditation:

### Philippians 3:12-17

"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. <sup>13</sup> 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, <sup>14</sup> I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus. <sup>15</sup> 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. <sup>16</sup> Only let us live up to what we have already attained. <sup>17</sup> Join with others in following my example, brothers, and take note of those who live according to the pattern we gave you."

#### **Revelation:**

1. What is it that Paul presses on to take hold of? What does that mean to you?

2. What area of your past continues to sneak up on you and bog you down? How does it affect you? Is this an area for counseling, mentoring, or healing prayer?

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### Day 1

3. How does this Scripture tie into the idea that "growth toward Christ-likeness requires accountability, process and perseverance?"

### **Application:**

1. Make a short list of things that Paul would say that "we have already attained." What do these things look like in your life? Spend some time in reflection and thanksgiving for these things.

2. Do a case study or read a biography of an individual from history who lived according to the pattern demonstrated by Paul.

### **Reflection:**

"Lord, you said that we should press on toward the goal to win the prize for which you have called us heavenward in Christ Jesus. Help me press on today in you."

### Day 2

#### Context:

Honoring the Seasons of Your Life

### Preparation:

God as Judicious

#### Meditation:

#### **Ecclesiastes 3:1-14**

"There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven: <sup>2</sup> a time to be born and a time to die, a time to plant and a time to uproot, <sup>3</sup> a time to kill and a time to heal, a time to tear down and a time to build, <sup>4</sup> a time to weep and a time to laugh, a time to mourn and a time to dance, <sup>5</sup> a time to scatter stones and a time to gather them, a time to embrace and a time to refrain, <sup>6</sup> a time to search and a time to give up, a time to keep and a time to throw away, <sup>7</sup> a time to tear and a time for peace. <sup>9</sup> What does the worker gain from his toil? <sup>10</sup> I have seen the burden God has laid on men. <sup>11</sup> 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. <sup>12</sup> I know that there is nothing better for men than to be happy and do good while they live. <sup>13</sup> That everyone may eat and drink, and find satisfaction in all his toil – this is the gift of God. <sup>14</sup> 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."

#### **Revelation:**

1. What season of life are you in now? What is receiving the majority of attention from you right now? Is this in line with your season of life? Consider again the list of our needs and God's priorities from Session 2. What new thinking or revelations have you received about this since that session? OMEGA

# Day 2

2. If you had to pick one aspect of this verse that you most connect with today, what would it be?

3. Which aspect would you like to experience more of today?

### **Application:**

1. Make a list of each of the appointed times indicated in this verse. Next to each one, indicate the last time you participated in or experienced it and in what way. What insights do you have from looking at this list?

2. Take some time to be aware of and contemplate the beauty you see around you today...in people... in nature...in art. Take your journal with you and write down some of the things where God reveals His beauty to you.

### **Reflection:**

"Lord, you said, 'There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven.' Help me appreciate the season of life you have me in today."

### Day 3

**Context:** Goal Setting and Perseverance

### **Preparation:** The Lord as Persistent

#### Meditation:

### 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. <sup>37</sup> For in just a very little while, "He who is coming will come and will not delay. <sup>38</sup> But my righteous one will live by faith. And if he shrinks back, I will not be pleased with him." <sup>39</sup> But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who believe and are saved."

### **Revelation:**

1. What are the promises of God that await you?

2. If you had to explain how to live "by faith" to an atheist, how would you do it?

3. If you lived with the reality that God is coming back sooner rather than later, how would it change your day? How would it affect your desire and ability to persevere?

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### Day 3

### Application:

1. Meditate for 5-10 minutes on your identity as one who is a believer and is saved. Write these two words on an index card where you will see them throughout the day.

2. When are you most susceptible to shrinking back? Jot down a few thoughts on your trouble spots and share them with an accountability partner. How can he or she encourage you best during these times?

### **Reflection:**

"Lord, you said that we need to persevere so that when we have done your will, we will receive what you have promised. Help me persevere and do your will today."

### **Homework Session 22**

- 1. Journal through the discussion and reflection questions in your workbook and reflect upon the Law of Growth and its implications for your life. Specifically consider your current life experience with Accountability, Process and Perseverance.
- 2. Complete the planning sheets in your homework by thinking through three roles in your life using the Role Planning Worksheets.
- 3. Briefly complete the Long and Short Range Goal Planning Worksheets in order to create the big picture of your Growth Plan.
- 4. Once you have completed these worksheets, share your findings with a mentor and a member of your Inner Circle asking them for their wisdom and feedback into your new spiritually discerned Growth Plan for your life.

### Discussion and reflection questions journal:

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### **Homework Session 22**

**Role Planning Worksheets** 

Role: \_\_\_\_\_

Thinking about this role

Milestones: (What milestones have I accomplished in this area of my life? What am I proud of doing that has helped me grow toward God's will for my life?)

Ideas: (What are some of the ideas for growth or opportunities that I thought would be good to try?)

Roadblocks: (What are the obstacles in my way that discourage me from trying ideas that I have for growth?)

Resources: (What are the resources that I have at my disposal that I could leverage to help me grow in this role?)

### **Homework Session 22**

### **Role Planning Worksheets**

Planning for this role

Five Year Goals: (In general and specific, what would I like my life to look like in regard to this area/role of my life five years from today?)

Two Year Goals: (In general and specific, what would I like my life to look like in regard to this area/role of my life two years from today?)

One Year Goals: (In general and specific, what would I like my life to look like in regard to this area/role of my life one year from today?)

Three Month Goals: (In general and specific, what would I like my life to look like in regard to this area/role of my life three months from today?)

Daily/Weekly Disciplines: (What are the Spirit-discerned daily or weekly disciplines that I feel God prompting me to engage in at this time?)

Projects: (What are some of the projects that I feel led to do for the next three months that will strategically grow me in this area/role of my life?)

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### **Homework Session 22**

**Role Planning Worksheets** 

Role: \_\_\_\_\_

Thinking about this role

Milestones: (What Milestones have I accomplished in this area of my life? What am I proud of doing that has helped me grow toward God's will for my life?)

Ideas: (What are some of the ideas for growth or opportunities that I thought would be good to try?)

Roadblocks: (What are the obstacles in my way that discourage me from trying ideas that I have for growth?)

Resources: (What are the resources that I have at my disposal that I could leverage to help me grow in this role?)

### **Homework Session 22**

### **Role Planning Worksheets**

Planning for this role

Five Year Goals: (In general and specific, what would I like my life to look like in regard to this area/role of my life five years from today?)

Two Year Goals: (In general and specific, what would I like my life to look like in regard to this area/role of my life two years from today?)

One Year Goals: (In general and specific, what would I like my life to look like in regard to this area/role of my life one year from today?)

Three Month Goals: (In general and specific, what would I like my life to look like in regard to this area/role of my life three months from today?)

Daily/Weekly Disciplines: (What are the Spirit-discerned daily or weekly disciplines that I feel God prompting me to engage in at this time?)

Projects: (What are some of the projects that I feel led to do for the next three months that will strategically grow me in this area/role of my life?)

OMEGA

### **Homework Session 22**

**Role Planning Worksheets** 

Role: \_\_\_\_\_

Thinking about this role

Milestones: (What milestones have I accomplished in this area of my life? What am I proud of doing that has helped me grow toward God's will for my life?)

Ideas: (What are some of the ideas for growth or opportunities that I thought would be good to try?)

Roadblocks: (What are the obstacles in my way that discourage me from trying ideas that I have for growth?)

Resources: (What are the resources that I have at my disposal that I could leverage to help me grow in this role?)

### **Homework Session 22**

### **Role Planning Worksheets**

Planning for this role

Five Year Goals: (In general and specific, what would I like my life to look like in regard to this area/role of my life five years from today?)

Two Year Goals: (In general and specific, what would I like my life to look like in regard to this area/role of my life two years from today?)

One Year Goals: (In general and specific, what would I like my life to look like in regard to this area/role of my life one year from today?)

Three Month Goals: (In general and specific, what would I like my life to look like in regard to this area/role of my life three months from today?)

Daily/Weekly Disciplines: (What are the Spirit-discerned daily or weekly disciplines that I feel God prompting me to engage in at this time?)

Projects: (What are some of the projects that I feel led to do for the next three months that will strategically grow me in this area/role of my life?)

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Category	Identity Role	Weekly/Daily Disciplines	3 Month Goals	1 Year Mega Goals
Christ Follower				
	Heart			
	Soul			
	Mind			
	Strength			
Community Member				
	Inner Circle			
	Relative/ Parent			
	Member (Worship/ Small Group)			
	Mentee/ Mentor (Personal)			
	Ambassador/ Friend			

Role	Weekly/Daily Disciplines	3 Month Goals	1 Year Mega Goals
Steward of Resources			
Minister of Compassion			
Empowered Servant			
Mentee/ Mentor (Professional)			
Professional Role:			
	Image: series of the series	Steward of ResourcesMinister of CompassionMinister of CompassionEmpowered ServantMentee/ Mentor (Professional)Professional Role:Professional Role:Professional Role:Professional Role:Professional Role:	Steward of Resources       Image: Compassion         Minister of Compassion       Image: Compassion         Empowered Servant       Image: Compassion         Mentee/ Mentor (Professional)       Image: Compassion         Professional Role:       Image: Compassion         Professional       Image: Compassion         Professional       Image: Compassion         Professional Role:       Image: Compassion

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Category	Identity Role	Milestones	Ideas	Roadblocks
Christ Follower				
	Heart			
	Soul			
	Mind			
	Strength			
	0			

Resources	1 Year Goals	2 Year Goals	5 Year Goals	]
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Category	Identity Role	Milestones	Ideas	Roadblocks
Community Member				
	Inner Circle			
	Relative/ Parent			
	Tarent			
	Church Member			
	Mentee/ Mentor			
	A 1 1			
	Ambassador			

Resources	1 Year Goals	2 Year Goals	5 Year Goals

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Category	Identity Role	Milestones	Ideas	Roadblocks
Called Servant				
	Steward of Resources			
	Empowered Servant			
	Minister of Compassion			
	Mentee/ Mentor (Profesional)			
	Profession Role:			

Resources	1 Year Goals	2 Year Goals	5 Year Goals

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Session 22: Personal Development Plan - Homework



# In this session participants will:

Cognitive (Knowing Objectives)

• Grasp the necessity and process of alignment in the life of discipleship.

#### Affective (Feeling Objectives)

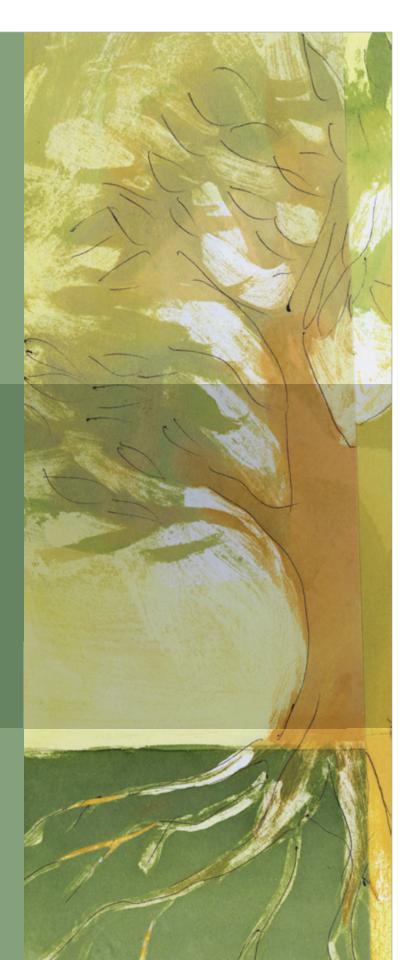
 Feel confident and competent to make in-course adjustments along the journey of discipleship.

#### **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.







# 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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# 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. <sup>33</sup> Listen to my instruction and be wise; do not ignore it. <sup>34</sup> Blessed is the man who listens to me, watching daily at my doors, waiting at my doorway. <sup>35</sup> For whoever finds me finds life and receives favor from the LORD. <sup>36</sup> 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? <sup>29</sup> For if he lays the foundation and is not able to finish it, everyone who sees it will ridicule him, <sup>30</sup> saying, This fellow began to build and was not able to finish. <sup>31</sup> 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? <sup>32</sup> 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. <sup>33</sup> 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

#### 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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#### 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**



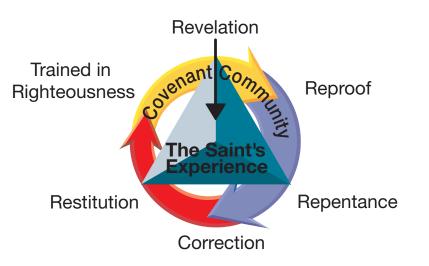
God desires to speak into our lives and reveal truth to us about who we really are and how we are really following His path towards abundant living. We can become aware of several sin areas in our lives, but making adjustments and following through on the cycle of renewal is necessary if we are going 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. <sup>13</sup> But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called Today, so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness. <sup>14</sup> We have come to share in Christ if we hold firmly till the end the confidence we had at first. <sup>15</sup> 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 ( )		

# Session 23: Aligning with God - Discussion and Reflection

# **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?

# Day 1

**Context:** The Law of Alignment

**Preparation:** The Lord as Present

#### Meditation:

#### Jeremiah 29:13

"You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart."

#### **Revelation:**

1. What does seeking God look like in your life...daily...weekly...monthly?

2. What added dimension does seeking God with our hearts bring to this Scripture, especially in light of our discussion of "heart" in Session 5?

3. If you were to identify three different ways that we "find" God, what would they be?

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# Day 1

#### **Application:**

1. Sometimes we get used to "our" ways of seeking God. Today, investigate some different ways of seeking God that you may not have done in a while or may not have ever tried before. You might visit a church service outside of your denomination, spend the day serving those in need, walk a labyrinth, or go on a silent retreat for a time.

2. Use this Scripture as a point on which to center as you complete your planning pages.

#### **Reflection:**

"Lord, you said that we would find you when we seek you with all of our heart. Help me seek you and find you today."

# Day 2

#### Context:

Planning and Tracking: Projects

#### **Preparation:** The Lord as Counsel

#### Meditation:

#### Luke 14:28-35

"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? <sup>29</sup> For if he lays the foundation and is not able to finish it, everyone who sees it will ridicule him, <sup>30</sup> saying, "This fellow began to build and was not able to finish." <sup>31</sup> "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? <sup>32</sup> 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. <sup>33</sup> In the same way, any of you who does not give up everything he has cannot be my disciple. <sup>34</sup> "Salt is good, but if it loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? <sup>35</sup> 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."

#### **Revelation:**

1. What concepts and insights on planning and tracking can we glean from this Scripture?

2. How do these ideas apply to our spiritual journey with the Lord? How does this impact our attitude for a long-term walk with Christ?

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# Day 2

3. How "salty" are you today?

#### Application:

1. Make a list of the projects you have in process right now. Use this Scripture as a checkpoint for tracking your alignment with the will of God concerning these things. What is He saying to you?

2. Is there a project that you need to think through more thoroughly and plan a realistic process for completion before proceeding? If so, take some time today to use the planning pages and the concepts found in this Scripture to do so.

#### **Reflection:**

"Lord, you said, 'He who has ears to hear, let him hear.' Help me hear what you are saying to me today."

## Day 3

**Context:** Revelations and Adjustments

#### **Preparation:** God as Dependable

#### Meditation:

#### Hebrews 3:12-15

"See to it, brothers, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God. <sup>13</sup> But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called Today, so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness. <sup>14</sup> We have come to share in Christ if we hold firmly till the end the confidence we had at first. <sup>15</sup> As has just been said: "Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as you did in the rebellion.""

#### **Revelation:**

1. How does encouragement from others keep us from becoming hardened by sin's deceitfulness?

2. In light of our discussion in Session 5, what does it mean to "harden your heart?" What impact does this have upon Revelations and Adjustments?

3. What does "the confidence we had at first" look like in your life? How is this affected by sin's deceitfulness?

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# Day 3

#### **Application:**

1. Write out the story of your conversion so that you could tell it in one or two minutes.

2. Ask God to bring someone who needs to be encouraged into your day. Journal the thoughts and ideas He brings about this tonight.

#### **Reflection:**

"Lord, you said that 'We have come to share in Christ if we hold firmly till the end the confidence we had at first.' Help me hear your voice and respond."

# **Homework Session 23**

- 1. Journal through the discussion and reflection questions in your workbook by reflecting upon your current life experience with planning and using a time management system.
- 2. Complete the Weekly Compass you began in Session 21 by adding in the Key Tasks and Appointments that you discerned.
- 3. Using the blank calendar pages provided or a day timer, plan your life for the next month.
- 4. Once you have completed these worksheets, share your findings with a mentor and a member of your Inner Circle asking for their wisdom and feedback into your new spiritually discerned Growth Plan for your life.

#### Discussion and reflection questions journal:

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Session 23: Personal Development Plan - Homework

# **Homework Session 23**

Plan how you are going to spend your time your time this week (below).

		Week:	 Year:	Year:			
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# **Homework Session 23**

Plan how you are going to spend your time your time this week (below).

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# **Homework Session 23**

Plan how you are going to spend your time your time this week (below).

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# **Homework Session 23**

Plan how you are going to spend your time your time this week (below).

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# 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)**

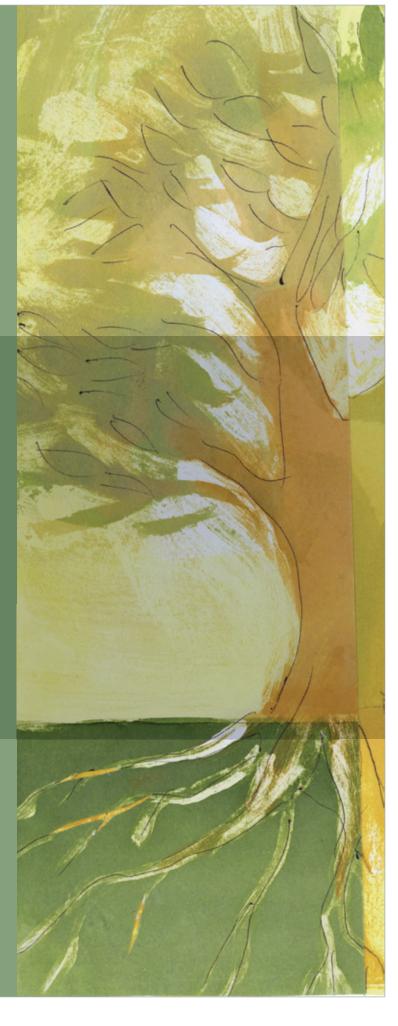
• Be hopeful and encouraged to embrace God's training in righteousness and live the Abundant Life in Christ.

#### **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

<sup>24</sup>Do 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. <sup>25</sup> 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. <sup>26</sup> Therefore I do not run like a man running aimlessly; I do not fight like a man beating the air. <sup>27</sup> 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. <sup>8</sup> 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. <sup>27</sup> And anyone who does not carry his cross and follow me cannot be my disciple. <sup>28</sup> 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? <sup>29</sup> 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? <sup>35</sup> 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



# Session 24: Training for Abundant Living - Discussion and Reflection

# **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?

## Day 1

**Context:** The Law of Training

**Preparation:** The Lord as Trainer

#### Meditation:

#### 1 Corinthians 9:24-27

<sup>24</sup>Do 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. <sup>25</sup> 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. <sup>26</sup> Therefore I do not run like a man running aimlessly; I do not fight like a man beating the air. <sup>27</sup> 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.

#### **Revelation:**

1. In considering the various types of races, would you say that the life of faith is more of a sprint or a marathon? How does your response integrate with the Law of Training?

2. What does it mean to run "aimlessly?" How does this manifest itself as a temptation for believers?

3. What do you think Paul is trying to convey when he says, "I beat my body and make it my slave?"

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# Day 1

#### **Application:**

1. Think through the history of your "training" with God. What are five of your most memorable moments? List them as well as the training that you received through them.

2. Spend some time considering areas of your life where you may be "running aimlessly." What would it take to reestablish an aim in these areas? Do any of these areas threaten to disqualify you for the "prize?"

#### **Reflection:**

"Lord, you said, 'They do it to get a crown that will not last; but we do it to get a crown that will last forever.' Help me to live my life today in such a way that I will obtain a crown that will last forever."

#### Day 2

**Context:** Stay the Course

#### **Preparation:** God as Sustainer

#### Meditation:

#### 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. <sup>2</sup> Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. <sup>3</sup> If anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself. <sup>4</sup> Each one should test his own actions. Then he can take pride in himself, without comparing himself to somebody else, <sup>5</sup> for each one should carry his own load. <sup>6</sup> Anyone who receives instruction in the word must share all good things with his instructor. <sup>7</sup> Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. <sup>8</sup> 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. <sup>9</sup> Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. <sup>10</sup> Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers."

#### **Revelation:**

1. What does restoring a brother "gently" look like? What doesn't it look like?

2. How does comparing ourselves to others affect us? How might it affect others to whom we are comparing ourselves?

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# Day 2

3. How would one become weary from doing good?

#### Application:

1. Is there someone in your life that has suffered from NOT being restored gently? Lift up this person in prayer today. If possible, reach out and encourage that person in some way today.

2. Intentionally "do good" to a fellow believer today. Journal your reflections on this circumstance tonight."

#### **Reflection:**

"Lord, you said, 'for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.' Help me not give up today and remain hopeful of the harvest yet to come."

# Session 24: Daily Devotional

# Day 3

**Context:** Stay the Course

**Preparation:** God as Sustainer

### Meditation:

### Psalm 51:10-12

"Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. <sup>11</sup> Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me. <sup>12</sup> Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me."

### **Revelation:**

1. How could having a pure heart facilitate our ability to "Stay the Course?"

2. Which aspect of these verses stands out to you the most and why?

3. If there were one area where God would like you to have a more willing spirit, where would it be?



# Session 24: Daily Devotional

# Day 3

### **Application:**

1. Which things come to your mind when you ask God to create a pure heart in you? Are these merely annoying and seldom made mistakes, or are they nagging areas of impurity that you just can't seem to get rid of? Talk to a mentor or counselor about these issues today and make a plan to address them in the future.

2. What would you like a steadfast spirit to look like in you? What qualities or characteristics would this encompass? Make a list in your journal that you can come back to as you continue to "Stay the Course."

### **Reflection:**

"Lord, create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me."

# **Homework Session 24**

- 1. Journal through the discussion and reflection questions in your workbook by reflecting upon who you are becoming and your current life experience with training.
- 2. Look at the Fruit of the Spirit and reflect on your current experience with fruit bearing. Listen for the factors God brings to mind that inhibit Him from bearing fruit in and through your life. Using the tools contained in Omega, try to discover the root cause of this sin or negative belief and the path to God's abundant life.
- 3. If you haven't already, find a mentor or multiple mentors and process your Omega experience with them.

### Discussion and reflection questions journal:

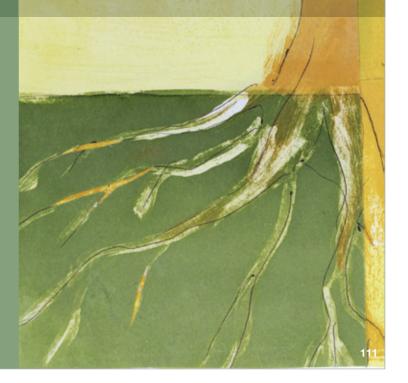


For more resources, thoughts, and discussion about this session, please visit www.lifespringnetwork.org

# Session 24: Personal Development Plan - Homework

# Homework Journal - question #2

# Appendices



# Appendix A: The 18 Natural Laws of Life Stewardship<sup>™</sup>

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<sup>™</sup>

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

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# 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,	<ul> <li><sup>46</sup> "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,</li> <li><sup>47</sup> praising God"</li> </ul>	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,	<sup>42b</sup> "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	<sup>42a</sup> "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.	<sup>43</sup> "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.	<ul> <li><sup>44</sup> "All believers were together and had everything in common.</li> <li><sup>45</sup> Selling their possessions and goods they gave to anyone as he had need."</li> </ul>	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.	<sup>42c</sup> " to the breaking of bread" <sup>47b</sup> " 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."	<sup>42d</sup> 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

# 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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# **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

- 17. Teaching
- 18. Celebration
- 19. Service
- 20. Fellowship
- 21. Confession
- 22. Submission
- 23. Friendship Evangelism
- 24. Assembling
- 25. Hospitality
- 26. Intercessory Prayer

- and Wisdom Engagement
- 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..."



### 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* 

# 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.





### 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.

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# 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.











### 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.

# References and Acknowledgments

We have kept the reference numbering system and labeling of appendices consistent with what is found in the original Omega Course Workbook - which covers all 24 sessions.

7. Pue, Carson, 2006. *Mentoring Leaders: Wisdom for Developing Character, Calling and Competency.* Grand Rapids: Baker Publishing.

17. Adapted from John Ortberg's course An Ordinary Day with Jesus.

18. Smith, Hyrum W., 1994. *The Ten Natural Laws of Successful Time and Life Management*. New York: Warner Books. Page 30 in workbook.

### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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# 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

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# 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.