



Discovery Handbook

Updated Digital

Version 2024



Discovery is a program developed by Christina L. Showalter, PhD., and Nathan D. Showalter, ThD., for pastoral and congregational leaders in LMC. The Showalters worked under the guidance of the moderator and bishops of LMC from 1998-2003. They were assisted at many points by many others, but special recognition is given to David Witmer who developed material on life purpose and Marcus Smucker who shaped the curriculum on spiritual growth. The Discovery curriculum was translated to Spanish by Alexis Roman Rodriguez and Pastor Daniel Sanchez .

Permission is hereby granted for the material in this manual to be duplicated in whole or in part for use in a district, local congregation, or classroom, provided that the resulting copies are distributed free of charge, the copies are unaltered, and the unedited versions of the originals, and the copies include the following notice: Copyright © 2003 by LMC. Reprinted from *Discovery Handbook*.

LMC retains the sole authority to make changes to the materials that are used in teaching the course called “*Discovery*.” Any version of this course that uses only part of these materials or altered versions of these materials should not be called *Discovery*, in order to avoid confusion about the course content.

For any other use, advance permission must be obtained from LMC.

All scripture quotations are taken from the New International Version (NIV) unless otherwise indicated.

LMC

450 N Prince Street

Lancaster, PA, 17601

717-293-5246

information@lmcchurches.org

www.information@lmcchurches.org



SCHEDULE

Session 1

What is Discovery?

- An overview of the Discovery process and how it will help me become a lifelong learner who is growing on purpose
- Spiritual discipline: Solitude/Prayer of Worship

Session 2

You are a Gifted Child of God

- Discover or confirm my spiritual gifts
- How my spiritual gifts shape my motivation and passion
- How my spiritual gifts relate to my life purpose
- Review Solitude/Prayer of Worship
- Spiritual discipline: Solitude & Silence/Prayer of Consecration

Session 3

What is your passion? Your Emotional IQ?

- Learn how my personality and my spiritual gifts inter-relate
- Learn how to use my emotions to strengthen my relationships and ministry
- Review feedback from my spiritual/emotional maturity inventory
- Review Solitude & Silence/Prayer of Consecration
- Spiritual discipline: Dwelling in the Word/Journaling/Written Prayer

Session 4

Discovering Your Uniqueness

- Receive a comprehensive report about my temperament (DISC) that helps me understand my natural behavior patterns
- Deepen my understanding of myself, how I relate to and communicate with others, and how I can understand and guard against my weaknesses
- Spiritual discipline: Storyteller Imagination/Prayer of Faith

Session 5

My Deep Gladness, The World's Deep Hunger

- Begin to discover “where my deep gladness and the world’s deep hunger meet”
- Develop a draft of my Personal Purpose Statement
- Spiritual discipline: Personal Reflection/Prayer of Thanksgiving

Session 6

Putting it All Together

- Review and integrate work from sessions 2-5
- Understand what my spiritual gifts, my passion, my emotional IQ, my DISC profile, and my personal purpose statement indicate about my current situation, my sense of future mission, and my growth areas.
- Spiritual discipline: Petition/Intercession

Session 7

Developing a Growth Plan

- Develop SMART growth goals
- Draft a Growth Plan
- Share and reshape my Growth Plan with my team or table group (and with my mentor if possible)
- Spiritual discipline: Daily Devotions plan

Session 8

Transforming Friendship

- Learn what mentoring is and why it is important for achieving my Personal Purpose
- Spend time reviewing my Growth Plan with my mentor (if he or she is present)
- Begin shaping a Mentoring Agreement (with my mentor)
- Dedicate my Growth Plan and my mentoring relationship to God.
- Spiritual discipline: Spiritual Friendship

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Section 1 - What is Discovery?	5
Section 2 - You are a Gifted Child of God	23
Section 3 - What is Your Passion? Your Emotional IQ?	35
Section 4 - Discovering Your Uniqueness	65
Section 5 - My Deep Gladness, the World's Deep Hunger	92
Section 6 - Putting it all Together	115
Section 7 - Developing a Growth Plan	131
Blank Growth Plan	162
Section 8 - Transforming Friendship	164
 Appendix	 180
Spiritual Gifts Experience Assessment	181
Observation Assessments 1-3	190
Observer Summary Sheet	199
Spiritual Gifts Summary	201
Discovery Evaluation Form	203

1 What is Discovery?

*For he chose us in him
before the creation of the world
to be holy and blameless
in his sight.*

(Ephesians 1:4)

Objectives for Discovery Session One

1. Understand the big picture of Discovery.
2. Confirm that God had a special purpose in creating me; commit myself to a process of clarifying God's unique mission for my life.
3. Commit myself to daily prayer and scripture reading.
4. Receive the *Discovery* notebook and the *Network* book.
5. Commit to developing a Growth Plan that helps me move toward the future God intends for me.
6. Commit to working with a mentor who will support my spiritual growth during the next year.

Schedule:

Introductions

Pick a friendly stranger at your table, someone you don't know very well. If possible, pick someone who attends a different church than you. Each person has 5 minutes to share:

- a. Name
- b. An important event or milestone in your life. Tell your partner enough about the event so it's clear why the event is significant.

Introduction to Discovery

Spiritual Discipline: Solitude/Prayer of Worship

Introduction to Spiritual Gifts

What is Discovery?

1. Discovery is time spent that could change your life forever.

Discovery is an eight-session exploration that will help you connect in a new way with God and his plans for your life. You will join with others in this guided journey of discovery. You'll use tools to help you learn more about yourself, your spiritual gifts, your personality, your emotions, and how you can relate more effectively to others.

Discovery invites you to undertake a **daily discipline** of reflecting on God's purpose for your life through Bible-centered prayer and meditations.

Will you commit to this process? Are you willing to spend 10-15 minutes every day practicing spiritual discipline through the prayer exercises provided?

2. Discovery is encountering God in a fresh and intimate way.

The God who made you also came close to you through Jesus. He fills you with his Spirit, and desires to have an intimate friendship with you. This life God offers us through Jesus is “adventurously expectant, greeting God with a childlike ‘What’s next, Papa?’” (Romans 8:15 Msg) Deepening your personal relationship with God is the first step to discovering God's purpose for your life.

Are you ready to raise your spiritual IQ? To become more spiritually intelligent, asking God to “make you intelligent and discerning in knowing him personally, your eyes focused and clear, so that you can see exactly what it is he is calling you to do”? (see Ephesians 1:17-18, Msg)

3. Discovery is learning more about God's plan for your life, and your unique purpose as a follower of Jesus.

God created the universe, the galaxies, the solar system, and you.

“For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place. When I was woven together in the depths of the earth, your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.” (Psalm 139:13-16)

And just as God designed the world around us with order and purpose, so he made each of us with a purpose. Not only does God have a general purpose for your life, he also has a unique, specific purpose for you. If God notices when a sparrow falls, surely he is concerned about the smallest details of your life.

“It's in Christ that we find out who we are and what we are living for. Long before we first heard of Christ...he had his eye on us, had designs on us for glorious living, part of the overall purpose he is working out in everything and everyone.” (Ephesians 1:11 Msg)

Are you ready to ask God to clarify for you the specific purposes he had in mind when he created you?

4. Discovery confirms gifts you have received from the Holy Spirit.

You are a gifted child of God. Discovery is a time for you to think about different ministries and ways of serving, so that you can become more comfortable with the ways the Spirit's presence is being shown in your life.

“Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.” (I Corinthians 12:7)

“The Spirit's presence is shown in some way in each person for the good of all.” (1 Corinthians 12:7 TEV)

God gives us gifts, and may gift us differently at different times in our lives. Discovery provides a tool to help you learn more about your gift mix. And we encourage you to step out in some new ministries as you learn more about the way God's Spirit has gifted you. Do you know your spiritual gifts? How are you currently using your spiritual gifts?

Are you open to testing your gifts in some new areas of ministry?

5. Discovery is learning more about your personality and how you relate to others.

During the Discovery process you'll be learning more about your personality using the DISC tool. You'll gain insight about how you naturally express yourself in your work, ministry, leadership, and relationships. You'll learn more about your strengths and your weaknesses and how your personality affects the way you use your spiritual gifts. By discovering more about your personality, you'll be increasing self-knowledge. You will learn to appreciate who God made you to be.

Are you intimidated by the thought of learning more about your personality? Your strengths and weaknesses? Why or why not?

6. Discovery is exploring your attitudes and emotions, and learning how to improve your relational skills.

As we learn to listen to God, we grow as Christians. As we learn to listen to others, we grow as leaders. The Chinese character that means "to listen" is composed of four elements: ear, eyes, undivided attention, and heart. In Discovery we learn to listen with our eyes as well as with our ears. We practice listening with our heart as well as with our head.

Among the fruit of the Spirit is self-control (Galatians 5:22-23). God gives us emotions and the capacity to recognize our own feelings and those of others. The Spirit motivates us to manage our own emotions effectively and to empathize with the emotions of others. In Discovery you will learn to understand and accept who you are as a person *with emotions* made in the image of God (who also expresses emotion). You will develop skills to manage your own emotions, and in the ability to perceive and respond appropriately to the emotions of others.

Are you ready to grow in "self-management" (what the Bible calls self-control)?

7. Discovery is reviewing your life experiences and discerning your passion for serving others.

During Discovery you will be invited to review your life experiences and to reflect on how those various experiences -- family, educational, vocational, spiritual and ministry experiences -- have impacted you. You will also consider how you have been shaped by painful experiences. These experiences, along with all

you are learning about your gifts, personality, and passion, will prepare you to develop your own sense of ministry passion.

What would your closest friends see as your heart, your passion? Who are the people you care most deeply about?

8. Discovery is developing a growth plan that helps you move toward the future God intends for you.

God loves you enough to not allow you to stay the same. He intends for you to keep changing and growing—to become more like Jesus. When you have an intimate relationship with God, you cannot be content with “same old, same old.” When you walk with Jesus, you will grow. The more you know about God, the more you want to be like him.

All of us want to grow. Discovery helps us to become more intentional about our growth as disciples of Jesus. Discovery helps us develop a practical, personal Growth Plan—a compass that helps direct you toward the future God intends for you. A mentor will walk with you during the class and over the next year as you discover your life purpose and pursue a Growth Plan that will help you to move toward the future God intends for you.

Are you willing to keep growing so that you can be all that you can be for God’s glory? Are you willing to develop a Growth Plan that will help you move toward the future God intends for you?

What do we ask of Discovery participants?

Every person who participates in Discovery is asked to commit to a one-year process:

Step One Attend all Discovery Sessions. Develop a Personal Purpose Statement and a Growth Plan.

Step Two Work with your mentor who will meet with you regularly for one year.

Step Three Pursue your Growth Plan; meet with your mentor regularly. Review your progress after three months and revise your Growth Plan as necessary.

Step Four After one year, review your progress with your mentor. Decide whether to continue your mentoring relationship or to bring it to closure. If you decide to continue, you may wish to develop a new one-year Growth Plan that builds on what you have done during the previous year.

What are my feelings about committing to a one-year process? What are my fears? What are my hopes

and dreams for another year of my life? Am I willing to express those dreams and fears? Am I willing, with God's help, to commit to one year of intentional learning and growth?

Am I willing, with God's help, to commit to a one-year mentoring relationship? How will I find a mentor? Who might be my mentor? How will I determine whether that person would be right for me? Available to support me in this way? How will I approach that potential mentor?

My commitment

With God's help I commit the next eight sessions of my life to discovering in a fresh way who I am and God's purpose for my life. I will also work to develop a growth plan and a mentoring relationship that will help me move toward that purpose during the year.

Spiritual Discipline: Solitude/ Prayer of Worship

On the Way with Jesus

As Christians we are on a spiritual journey with Jesus. It begins with God's invitation. We do not create or invent this journey. We are invited by God to be on this journey as a gift that comes to us through Christ. Jesus is both the beginning and the end of this journey.

"I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." (John 14:6 NIV)

According to Romans 5:6-9 and Ephesians 1:11-12, our salvation and spiritual growth begin with God's initiative, not our own. It is God who works in us to will and to do his desires.

You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous person, though for a good person someone might possibly dare to die. But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him! (Romans 5:6-9)

In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will, in order that we, who were the first to put our hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory. (Ephesians 1:11-12)

(see also Galatians. 4:19, Colossians. 1:17, and John 17:21, 23)

As we journey with Jesus, we enter more deeply into the life God provides for us through a process we call spiritual formation. We are shaped in this new life with God through the exercise of spiritual disciplines. We continue learning and growing in these disciplines throughout our life. Our spiritual growth requires our faithfulness and collaboration with God.

"Those who trust God's action in them find that God's Spirit is in them - living and breathing God! Obsession with self in these matters is a dead end; attention to God leads us out in the open, into a spacious, free life." (Romans 8:5-6 Msg)

So then, our journey with Jesus begins with God's invitation to receive Jesus Christ into our life (John 3:16), and matures as we let his life be formed in us (Galatians 4:19) and as we are transformed into the likeness of God (II Corinthians 3:18). God initiates this relationship and invites us to respond by opening ourselves to his continuing work within us.

Being in Christ

As Christians we are on a journey into the heart of God. On this journey we are to embrace the Great Commandment, which is to *“love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself.”* (Luke 10:27)

Jesus Christ is the starting point for our process of spiritual growth. We are in a continuing process of being formed by the Holy Spirit as God through Christ *in* us (John 17:23) and we are *in* God (John 17:21). Living in communion and union with God is a primary means of our continuing conversion and transformation.

When we are “in Christ” and “Christ in us” we participate in the life of the triune God. God, as Father, Son and Holy Spirit, is a relational being who lives a life of radical love and profound communion. God invites us to participate in this triune relationship through which we come to experience a measure of the divine communion and union.

Solitude and Prayer of Worship, which focuses on who God is, is a way of opening ourselves to God, of “being in Christ.” Jesus regularly sought solitude from the hectic pace of his ministry (Luke 5:16). And many individuals offered prayer that focused on who God is, not on what he might do for us (e.g. Luke 1:46-55, Exodus 15:1-21).

EXERCISE: SOLITUDE AND PRAYER OF WORSHIP

During Discovery, all spiritual exercises will be experienced in class as a “demonstration” of the discipline to be practiced at home for the following week (or whatever your meeting frequency). Each of the disciplines is designed to be practiced 10-15 minutes each day. You may set a timer so you can relax and settle into the exercise if you want.

Spiritual Exercise: Instructions for practice in class and at home.

- a. Sit quietly in a relaxed position in a place where you will not be disturbed.
- b. For several moments, choose to release those things that would distract you during this time of prayer—work, home, church. Your goal for the next 10-15 minutes is to maintain a prayer focus on God.
- c. Read Psalm 139:1-10 aloud, slowly, several times. In this psalm, David prays back to God his understanding of how completely God knows him. The focus is on God’s omniscience.

Psalm 139:1-10

¹ *O Lord, you have searched me and you know me.*

² *You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar.*

³ *You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways.*

⁴ *Before a word is on my tongue you know it completely, O Lord.*

⁵ *You hem me in-behind and before; you have laid your hand upon me.*

⁶ *Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too lofty for me to attain.*

⁷ *Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence?*

⁸ *If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there.*

⁹ *If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea,*

¹⁰ *even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast.*

d. Now it is your turn to pray back to God other declarations of your understanding of who God is.

e. Close your prayer time by praying the Lord's Prayer.

The Lord's Prayer (Matthew. 6:9-13)

“Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,

¹⁰*your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.*

¹¹*Give us this day our daily bread.*

¹²*Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.*

¹³*And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.*

[For yours is the Kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever and ever. Amen.]

Introduction to Spiritual Gifts

Important Themes:

- a. We should serve out of our love for the Lord. (*Luke 10:27; I Cor. 13*)
- b. We need each other to be complete. We need to grow in love for each other. (*I Cor. 12, 13*)
- c. Our gifts should be used to serve the body of Christ. Our focus should be on how we contribute to the larger good of the body of Christ. (*I Cor. 12:7; I Pet. 4:10*)

Why discover more about spiritual gifts?

Discovering your Spiritual Gifts will help you understand how God has made you and how you can be fruitful and fulfilled in a meaningful place of service that will make a kingdom impact.

The goal is service that glorifies God and edifies others.

What are spiritual gifts?

1. Spiritual gifts are special abilities...
 - Spiritual gifts are divine endowments.
 - They are abilities God has given to us to make our unique contribution to the body.

Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. (I Cor. 12:7)

2. ...distributed by the Holy Spirit...
 - Spiritual gifts are given by God.
 - He bestows spiritual gifts to us for meaningful service.

All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each one, just as he determines. (I Cor. 12:11)

3. ...to every believer according to God's design and grace...
 - Every believer has at least one Spiritual gift.
 - God decides which gifts we have.
 - Every believer is a minister.

Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms. (I Pet. 4:10)

4. ...for the common good of the Body of Christ.

- The Spiritual gifts that God gives us allow us to serve one another better.
- A major test of our use of Spiritual gifts is to glorify God and edify others.

Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. (I Cor. 12:7)

Three cautions about spiritual gifts (OR harmful attitudes in the body of Christ)

1. Gift Projection: “Do as I do.” (*Rom. 12:6*)
2. Gift Elevation: “I have a more important gift than you do.” (*I Cor. 12:21*)
3. Gift Rejection: “I don’t have a spiritual gift.” (*I Cor. 12:7, 11; I Pet. 4:10*)

Homework for Session One

1. Repeat the “Solitude and Prayer of Worship” each day (10-15 minutes).
2. Begin thinking and praying about who you might ask to be your mentor. A sample letter to invite a mentor appears on the next page.
3. During the week, read and review Session 1.
4. Read *Network* book pp. 23-30.
5. Take the Spiritual Gifts Experience Assessment in preparation for the next class (see instructions below). Record your responses on the Spiritual Gifts answer key. Then provide your three Observers each with a copy of Observation Assessment. All of these materials are in the Appendix at the end of this document.
6. Bring this spiritual gifts information along to *Discovery* next session.

Spiritual Gift Inventory

Complete the Spiritual Gifts Experience Assessment in the Appendix. These pages are reproduced from the *Network* book, which you purchased. We provide a copy for you to use as your working copy for the assessment without having to cut or copy pages out of your book. After you complete the assessment, record your responses on the Spiritual Gifts answer key.

Then provide your three Observers each with a copy of an Observation Assessment, also in the Appendix. Refer to p. 53 in your *Network* book. *The best people to ask to fill out an Observation Assessment are Christians who have seen you involved in a ministry context. If this is not possible, ask people who know you well and can share observations from their knowledge and relationship with you.* You will want to have them return their copy to you before the next Discovery Class.

Following the sample Mentor letter, below, is a chart linked to the *Network* book to further explain the different Spiritual Gifts and a space to record the results of the Spiritual Gifts Assessment.

Prospective Mentor Letter

Insert date for session 8 in the letter below. If you desire the letter placed on LMC letterhead, contact the LMC office. You can scan or photocopy the letter or request the LMC office to provide you with an electronic copy of the letter.

Dear prospective mentor,

Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. The person who gave you this letter is currently participating in an eight-session seminar called "Discovery." This seminar is designed to give participants a clear understanding of the special mix of gifts, passions, and behavioral styles God has given each of them in order for them to make their own unique contributions to the kingdom of God. They also develop a richer appreciation for the variety of gifts, passions, and behavioral styles God has given to their brothers and sisters in Christ.

The person who gave you this letter has invited you to become a "Mentor" who will support and encourage her in her efforts to grow in her understanding and use of her gifts and passions in Christian service over the next year. I hope that you will consider this request seriously and prayerfully, and that you will make yourself available to serve in this way.

We guide participants through three concrete steps in Discovery that they will continue to work with over the next year. The eight-session Discovery seminar is really just the launch pad for a year-long focus on personal growth. First, we help participants to draft a personal purpose statement that expresses their sense of how God has uniquely equipped them to help extend his kingdom. Second, we help participants identify several specific areas of their lives in which they think God is calling them to grow, and we help them set some simple and achievable goals for growth in those areas. Third, we ask them to work with their pastors to identify someone who can serve as their mentor during the year that they work toward their new goals. As you can imagine, most Discovery participants report that the eight-session seminar and the year-long mentoring process were life-changing experiences for them. I hope you are able to be a part of this sort of experience for the person who gave you this letter.

If you agree to become a mentor, you will be welcome to visit Discovery with your mentoree any time, but we *especially urge you to attend on _____* (session 8) since the focus of the evening is on mentoring and we will provide some initial mentor training. Our office can provide an additional ten hours of mentor training that includes only mentors. This training is usually provided on two Saturday mornings from 8 a.m.-1 p.m. and is highly recommended, especially for those who have not already been trained to mentor. More information on these sessions is available through the person who gave you this letter.

Blessings to you in Christ Jesus,

Conrad Kanagy

Conrad Kanagy

LMC, Resource Staff

Spiritual Gifts in Scripture

This chart links the gifts to the explanations of the gift in the *Network* book.

Spiritual Gift	Contributes	Spiritual Gift Description	
		Basic	Detailed
1. Wisdom	Guidance	p. 50: U	p. 95
2. Knowledge	Awareness	p. 49: P	p. 87
3. Faith	Confidence	p. 46: I	p. 80
4. Healing	Wholeness	p. 47: L	p. 82
5. Miracles	God's power	p. 48: M	p. 90
6. Prophecy	Conviction	p. 51: W	p. 91
7. Discernment	Clarity	p. 44: C	p. 77
8. Tongues	A message	p. 51: V	p. 94
9. Interpretation	Understanding	p. 49: R	p. 86
10. Apostleship	New ministries	p. 44: A	p. 74
11. Teaching	Application	p. 50: S	p. 93
12. Helps (serving)	Support	p. 46: G	p. 83
13. Administration	Efficiency	p. 44: B	p. 73
14. Encouragement	Affirmation	p. 45: E	p. 78
15. Giving	Resources	p. 47: J	p. 81
16. Leadership	Direction	p. 48: O	p. 88
17. Mercy	Care	p. 49: Q	p. 89
18. Evangelism	The good news	p. 47: K	p. 79
19. Shepherding	Nurture	p. 50: T	p. 92
20. Hospitality	Acceptance	p. 46: H	p. 84
21. Craftsmanship	Skill	p. 45: D	p. 75
22. Intercession	Protection	p. 48: N	p. 85
23. Creative Communication	Artistic expression	p. 45: F	p. 76

What are my spiritual gifts?

Fill in this information from the work you've done in your spiritual gift assessment – including the observation assessments from your friends. The best people to ask are Christians who have seen you involved in a ministry context. If this is not possible, ask people who know you well and can share observations from their knowledge and relationship with you.

My three main spiritual gifts are (or might be):

How are you presently using these gifts in your congregation or in your community?

How else could you be using these gifts in your congregation or in your community?

2 You are a Gifted Child of God

*The Spirit's presence is shown in some way
in each person for the good of all.
(1 Corinthians 12:7 TEV)*

*It is God himself who has made us what we are
and given us new lives from Christ Jesus;
and long ages ago he planned
that we should spend
these lives in helping others.
(Ephesians 2:10 LB)*

*I glorified you on earth by completing
down to the last detail
what you assigned me to do.
(John 17:4 Msg)*

Objectives for Discovery Two

1. Deepen your understanding of what it means to be “on the way with Jesus” and to “abide in Christ.”
2. Learn more about the Spiritual gifts you have identified as yours .
3. Appreciate and value the importance of the variety of gifts.
4. Begin considering your Ministry Passion

Schedule:

Introductions/Conversations

Choose a conversation partner from your table, hopefully someone you don't know very well. As much as possible, pick someone who attends a different church than you do. Each person has 5 minutes to share. Make sure you know each other's name. Describe one of your strengths. What is something that you enjoy and do well? Illustrate with a story.

Ask Students about Last session's Practice

Spiritual Discipline: Solitude and Silence/Prayer of Consecration

Spiritual Gifts

Ministry Passion

Part 1: Introduction to Solitude and Silence/Prayer of Consecration

*My dear children, for whom I am again
in the pains of childbirth until Christ is formed in you” (Gal. 4:19)
... until Christ is fully developed in your lives. (NLT)
...until Christ's life becomes visible in your lives. (Msg)
...until you truly become like Christ. (NCV)
...until Christ may be seen living in you. (CEV)*

*To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles
the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. (Col. 1:27)*

*Christ is in you, therefore you can look forward
to sharing in God's glory. (Col. 1:27b Msg)*

Abiding in Christ

God's desire is that we continue to be changed and transformed to become more like Jesus.

How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure. (1 John 3:1-3)

...when Christ is openly revealed, we'll see him - and in seeing him, become like him. All of us who look forward to his Coming stay ready, with the glistening purity of Jesus' life as a model for our own. (1 John 3:2b-3 Msg)

This is a collaborative journey in which God initiates and we cooperate. As a journey, the destination of being Christlike is already in progress, but the completion is not yet possible until Christ's return. Spiritual life is a gift from God for those who desire it and cooperate with God's plans. To be in Christ we must "abide in him" (*John 15*). We are spiritually formed as we continue to open all the various aspects of our life to God's Spirit of renewal.

God keeps forming and transforming us...

"our lives gradually becoming brighter and more beautiful as God enters our lives and we become like him" (II Cor. 3:18 Msg)... "being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit." (II Cor. 3:18)

But this is a shared venture. We receive spiritual life not only by God's initiative but also through our desire and assent. To be "in Christ" we must abide in him. To understand our role in this relationship we take our cues from scripture, particularly from the life and teachings of Jesus. We observe from the interaction between Jesus and his disciples that they had a twofold task: to be in the presence of Jesus (*John 15:5-6*), and to do the work of God (*Mark 3:14-15*).

I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. If anyone does not remain in me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. (John 15:5-6)

He appointed twelve - designating them apostles - that they might be with him and that he might send them out to preach and to have authority to drive out demons. (Mark 3:14-15)

To live in the presence of God and to abide in Christ, we need to be open and responsive to his work and then consecrate ourselves to become more Christlike. We need to keep opening ourselves to receive God's

life into our life, and to grow in our relationship with God. As we abide in God's presence, we also learn to work for God by being in unity with God's movements in the world. Spiritual formation is not something we can attain, possess, or create ourselves. We are spiritually formed as we abide in God, live in agreement with him, and join in his work in the world. Our spiritual formation is rooted in the divine-human encounter and is always a work in progress. This relationship with God holds potential for the agony and elation inherent in any covenantal relationship that seeks intimacy, communion, union, and a common purpose or mission in life.

Solitude and Silence/Prayer of Consecration is one way to acknowledge this mutual relationship. Silence provides one way to express obedience, humility and dependence on God (Job 29:21, Ps 4:4, Zep. 1:7). It helps us listen. Consecration is that act of setting ourselves aside and dedicating ourselves to God.

EXERCISE: SOLITUDE AND SILENCE/PRAYER OF CONSECRATION

Spiritual Exercise: Instructions for practice in class and at home.

- a. Sit for a few moments in a private place where you will not be disturbed in silence before God.
- b. Read Mark 14 silently, slowly, several times. Listen to Jesus's words of consecration to God's plan.

Mark 14

³² *They went to a place called Gethsemane, and Jesus said to his disciples, "Sit here while I pray."* ³³ *He took Peter, James and John along with him, and he began to be deeply distressed and troubled.* ³⁴ *"My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death," he said to them. "Stay here and keep watch."*

³⁵ *Going a little farther, he fell to the ground and prayed that if possible the hour might pass from him.* ³⁶ *"Abba, Father," he said, "everything is possible for you. Take this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will."*

- c. Silently ask the Spirit to identify a personal need or concern in your life that hinders your own consecration to God's purposes for you. Listen for any response from God.
- d. Write a brief prayer to God in your journal on a piece of paper that addresses what you heard and how you might respond - or close your time by silently praying the Lord's Prayer.

The Lord's Prayer (Matt. 6:9-13)

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,

¹⁰ *your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.*

¹¹ *Give us this day our daily bread.*

¹²*Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.*

¹³*And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.*

For yours is the Kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

Part 2: Spiritual Gifts: diversity and interdependence*

Since each of us has a unique design, there is great diversity in the body of Christ. Our differences are by God's design.

*To one there is given through the Spirit
the message of wisdom,
to another the message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit,
to another faith by the same Spirit,
to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit,
to another miraculous powers,
to another prophecy,
to another distinguishing between spirits,
to another speaking in different kinds of tongues,
and to still another the interpretation of tongues.
All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each one, just as he
determines. (1 Cor. 12:8-11)*

All kinds of things are handed out by the Spirit, and to all kinds of people! The variety is wonderful:

*wise counsel
clear understanding
simple trust
healing the sick
miraculous acts
proclamation
distinguishing between spirits
tongues
interpretation of tongues.*

*All these gifts have a common origin, but are handed out one by one by the one Spirit of God.
He decides who gets what, and when. (1 Cor. 12:8-11 Msg)*

The stages of relationships

1. Dependence

This is where we were as babies and children. We depended on our parents for everything. We had no understanding of our uniqueness, we were just dependent on others.

2. Independence

It's what we wanted to be as we became teenagers. This is the goal of most people. Western culture has equated maturity with independence...the more mature, the more independent. We no longer depend on others.

But in God's design achieving uniqueness and diversity is not independence (i.e. maturity).

3. God's design is called interdependence

God's design for the church is that we serve like a body. We need to work together to be healthy and effective.

Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. (Rom. 12:4-6)

In this way we are like the various parts of a human body. Each part gets its meaning from the body as a whole, not the other way around. The body we're talking about is Christ's body of chosen people. Each of us finds our meaning and function as part of his body...So since we find ourselves fashioned into all these excellently formed and marvelously functioning parts in Christ's body, let's just go ahead and be what we were made to be, without enviously or pridefully comparing ourselves with each other, or trying to be something we aren't. (Rom. 12:4-6 Msg)

Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it. (I Cor. 12:27)

You are Christ's body - that's who you are! You must never forget this. Only as you accept your part of that body does your "part" mean anything. (I Cor. 12:27 Msg)

If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be? But in fact God has arranged the parts in the body, everyone of them, just as he wanted them to be. If they were all one part, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, but one body. (I Cor. 12:17-20)

...I also want you to think about how this keeps your significance from getting blown up into self-importance. For no matter how significant you are, it is only because of what you are a part of. An

enormous eye or a gigantic hand wouldn't be a body, but a monster. What we have is one body with many parts, each its proper size and in its proper place. No part is important on its own. (I Cor. 12:17-20 Msg)

Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? Do all have gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret? (I Cor. 12:29-30)

But it's obvious by now, isn't it, that Christ's church is a complete Body and not a gigantic, unidimensional Part? It's not all Apostle, not all Prophet, not all Miracle Worker, not all Healer, not all Prayer in Tongues, not all Interpreter of Tongues. (I Cor. 12:29-30 Msg)

Diversity is not division

If they were all one part, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, but one body.

But God has combined the members of the body and has given greater honor to the parts that lacked it, so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it. (I Cor. 12:19-20; 24b-26)

What we have is one body with many parts, each its proper size and in its proper place. No part is important on its own.

The way God designed our bodies is a model for understanding our lives together as a church: every part dependent on every other part, the parts we mention and the parts we don't, the parts we see and the parts we don't. If one part hurts, every other part is involved in the hurt, and in the healing. If one part flourishes, every other part enters into the exuberance. (I Cor. 12:19-20; 24b-26 Msg)

We are all diverse but we are called to serve without division.

Unity is not conformity

(I Cor. 12:17-20, 29-30 – text on previous page)

Unity is not achieved by being alike. Unity is achieved by having the same purpose: namely to glorify God and encourage and strengthen others.

Unity is not achieved by having common interests. Unity is achieved by having common commitment to a common purpose.

Part 3: Discovering Your Passion

What is passion?*

Passion is the God-given desire that compels us to make a difference in a particular ministry.

Trust in the LORD, and do good; Dwell in the land and cultivate faithfulness. Delight yourself in the LORD; And He will give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the LORD, Trust also in Him, and He will do it. (Ps. 37:3-5 NASB)

But when God, who set me apart from birth and called me by his grace, was pleased to reveal his Son in me so that I might preach him among the Gentiles, I did not consult any man. (Gal. 1:15-16)

When you have a passion for an area of ministry, you are more enthusiastic and motivated to serve.

Ministry Passion Assessment: a tool to help you discover your passion*

Directions

1. Prayerfully consider your answers to the following questions.
2. Complete the assessment on your own.
3. There are no right or wrong responses.
4. Don't be concerned about "whether" you can do it or "how" it can be done.
5. Complete the assessment as if there are no obstacles to fulfilling your heart's desire.
6. If you are not able to finish the assessment in class, do so this before the next session and bring it to class.

Questions

1. If you could snap your fingers and know that you couldn't fail, what would you do?
2. At the end of your life, what would you like to look back on and know that you had done something about?
3. If your name were to be mentioned to a group of your friends, what would they say you were really interested in or passionate about?

4. What conversation would keep you talking late into the night?

5. What would you most like to do for others?

6. The people you would like to help most are:

- Infants
- Teen moms
- Divorced
- Career women
- Parents
- Unemployed
- Prisoners
- Children
- Single parents
- Widowed
- Young marrieds
- Empty nesters
- Elderly
- Poor
- Youth
- College students
- Singles
- Refugees
- Homeless
- Disabled
- Hospitalized
- Other _____

7. The issues or causes you feel strongly about are:

- Environment
- Discipleship
- Violence
- Education
- Economic
- Health care
- Abortion
- Church
- Child care
- AIDS
- Peace
- Injustice
- Addictions
- Reaching the lost
- Poverty
- Hunger
- Homosexuality
- Politics
- Racism
- International
- Technology
- Family
- Literacy
- Other _____

8. List the top four or five positive experiences you've had in your life and briefly describe what you did and why it was meaningful to you. (These experiences may have taken place at home, work, school, or during your free time. It may have been a clock you fixed or a dress you made. It may have been a puzzle you put together or an award you received. It

may have been helping some friends move, building a house, winning an election, or giving to someone in need. Remember, these are experiences that you enjoyed doing and felt fulfilled.)

List these experiences.

Four or Five positive experiences	Why this experience is meaningful to me	Any Identifiable Theme
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		

Next, read through what you have written and look for an underlying theme. If one or two come to mind, write them in the space below.

9. I think the area where I could make the most significant contribution is:

If you need more help in identifying your Passion, look for patterns in your answers. For example, can you see any themes? Does a particular age group keep coming up? Is there a need that keeps surfacing? Are you serving in a similar role in different areas? Can you prioritize your concerns?

-
10. Use the worksheet below to note key words or phrases that clarify your passion.

Ted (example)

I have a passion for children young
single parent family
“problem”
at risk

Sue (example)

I have a passion for reaching the lost all
family & friends
neighborhood
co-workers
children

You

I have a passion for _____
(your passion) _____

11. Based on my answers to the above questions, I sense *I have a passion for*:

This is your first attempt at a passion statement! You will review this with your table group at the next meeting.

Making a Statement of Passion is not easy for everyone. Remember that this is just the beginning of the process of identifying and clarifying your Passion. As you think, pray, and gain more ministry experience, your Passion will become clearer over time.

** These materials have been adapted from pp 31-39 and 113-130 of “Network—The Right People in the Right Places for the Right Reasons at the Right Time” by Bruce Bugbee, Don Cousins, Bill Hybels, (Zondervan, 2005).*

Homework for Session Two

1. Repeat the “Silence/Solitude/Consecration” exercise each day (15 minutes).
2. During the week, read and review Session 2.
3. Meet with a potential mentor between sessions. Let them know about Mentor Training.
Invite them to Discovery 8 (Date, Time). A sample invitation letter is provided at the end of Session 1.
4. Finish the Ministry Passion Assessment above for next session.
5. Complete DISC profile before session 4 (see below).

Please Complete the DISC Personality Profile questionnaire before Session 4

The DISC Personal Profile System is a tool that helps you learn more about your personality—how you tend to act in various situations. We are asking you to go to <https://www.123test.com/disc-personality-test/> and complete the DISC questionnaire on the home page (read the instructions and begin selecting the appropriate “thumb”). This is free. You will get an almost immediate, exceedingly brief report. At the bottom of the report screen, select “Purchase your extended test report.” The cost to you should be \$14.99. You will use the data provided in the extended report to help you better understand your personality and to improve your personal and leadership effectiveness.

3 What is Your Passion?

Your Emotional IQ?

*Love the Lord your God with all your heart
and with all your soul
and with all your mind
and with all your strength...*

Love your neighbor as yourself. (Mark 12:30-31a)

*Let your roots grow down deep into Christ
and draw up nourishment from him.*

*See that you go on growing in the Lord,
and become strong and vigorous in the truth.*

(Colossians 2:7 LB)

Objectives for Discovery Three

1. Evaluate my Passion Statement with my table group.
2. Understand how my gifts and passion shape my relationships in the body of Christ.
3. Complete and evaluate The Spiritual/Emotional Health Inventory during class.
4. Understand the concept of “emotional intelligence” and how it helps you honor God and serve others more effectively.

Schedule:

Conversations in table groups

Each person has 7 minutes to share:

- a. [Make sure you know each person’s name.]
- b. 5 minutes for individual:
Read your passion statement and explain it to the group.
- c. 2 minutes for table group:
Ask clarifying questions.
Affirm the parts of the statement that make sense to you,
given what you know of the presenter.

Review last session’s practice of spiritual disciplines

- What did you like about it? What was helpful?
- What didn’t you like about it? What was difficult?

Spiritual Discipline: Dwelling in the Word, Journaling, and Written Prayers

Emotional Intelligence

Includes a series of discussion questions for in-class work.

Dwelling in the Word/Journaling/Written Prayers

Connecting with God through Spiritual Disciplines

Spiritual disciplines are essential to spiritual formation. We pursue spiritual disciplines for the purpose of engaging God. This practice does not make us more spiritual, but it is a means by which we embrace

relationship with God. Our persistence in spiritual practices may be a sign of our devotion to God and our fidelity to a covenant relationship with God. Spiritual practices are a way of cooperating with God.

Even as spiritual formation emerges out of the divine-human relationship, so spiritual disciplines are in service of that relationship. Although God initiates a relationship with us, and our transformation is the work of God, the effectiveness of God's work in us is influenced by our obedience and cooperation with God.

Our pursuit of disciplines needs to serve a holistic relationship with God. The Great Commandment provides content and depth to our understanding of our relationship with God. We are to love God with our whole being and to love our neighbor as self. In Luke 10, the stories of the Good Samaritan and Mary and Martha help explain the meaning of this. To be devoted to God, to love God with one's whole being, means we must embrace a rhythm of contemplation and action. We are called to accept the challenge to Martha - seek the "*one thing that is necessary*," and the challenge to the lawyer (Good Samaritan story) to "*go and do likewise*."

The Bible partially exists because the People of God wrote things down and preserved the writing. Later generations have pondered these writings and then wrote reflections on older writings and added new writings as well. Some of the preserved writing includes written prayers, perhaps the most famous being The Lord's Prayer. Paul's letters are an excellent example of this process. The spiritual discipline practices in this session combine these practices of reading Scripture, reflecting on it, keeping a written record of the interaction with the Spirit, and responding to the whole process with a written prayer to God. Lest anyone be confused, there is no suggestion here that this process creates "new Scripture." Rather the goal is listening for the voice of God.

2 Timothy 3:16-17 ; Psalm 119:105 ; Joshua 1:8; Matthew 4:4; Hebrews 4:12; Romans 15:4; 1 Timothy 4:13-16, Acts 17:11, Hab 2:1-3, Jer 30:1-3, Dt 31:19, Rev 21:5.

EXERCISE: *Dwelling in the Word/Journaling/Written Prayer*

Spiritual Exercise: Instructions for practice in class and at home.

- a. Choose one of the assigned scriptures (*see below*) for meditation each day.
- b. Sit quietly for a few moments asking God to open your heart and mind to the scripture.
- c. Read the scripture aloud, slowly, several times.
- d. As you read, notice whether any word or phrase attracts your attention. Reflect on that word or phrase and reflect on it. Ponder its meaning and jot down any thoughts in your journal.
- e. Observe how this scripture applies to your life. What invitation or call comes to you? Note in your journal your thoughts. Record any questions that occur to you during your reflection.
- f. In response to your meditation and journaling, write a prayer. Prepare a new prayer each day, or use the same prayer multiple times. For those gifted and inclined, perhaps you might write a song (Dt 31:19).

Psalm 119:105-112

*Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path.
I have taken an oath and confirmed it, that I will follow your righteous laws.
I have suffered much; preserve my life, O Lord, according to your word.
Accept, O Lord, the willing praise of my mouth, and teach me your laws.
Though I constantly take my life in my hands, I will not forget your law.
The wicked have set a snare for me, but I have not strayed from your precepts.
Your statutes are my heritage forever; they are the joy of my heart.
My heart is set on keeping your decrees to the very end.*

Colossians 3:12-15

Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity. Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful.

Revelation 21: 1-5

Then I saw "a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Look! God's dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. 'He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death' or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away." He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!" Then he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true."

Emotional Intelligence

Loving God and neighbor intelligently

Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind...Love your neighbor as yourself. (Matt. 22:37, 39)

This session we want to focus on intelligence. But we're not going to talk about intelligence the way you may be accustomed to. You are familiar with the term "IQ" (intelligence quotient), which is an

evaluation of your intellectual, cognitive, and reasoning skills. We will be talking about a different kind of intelligence.

As we have learned more about the amazing people God has created us to be in recent years, we are discovering that there are a number of different kinds of intelligence. For example there is an artistic intelligence - an awareness of and an ability to create things of beauty: music, painting, sculpture, quilts, etc. Or what about mechanical intelligence - the way we use our mind and hands to invent, build, and repair? There may be as many as six to eight different kinds of intelligence.

God has created us with such complexity that no one tool, no single measurement can begin to unravel or explain the wonder and depth of human personality. We are made in the image of God. The mystery and awesomeness of that creation will always escape our analytical skills, our psychological tools.

Today we want to explore “emotional intelligence”. Many people who study the way people live, relate, and work together are coming to believe that emotional intelligence is of more importance than IQ as a measure of human performance and effectiveness. It is not that IQ and technical skills are irrelevant; those are the basic requirements for any job or ministry. Researchers have increasingly confirmed that emotional intelligence is a critical essence of leadership. “Without it, a person can have the best training in the world, an incisive, analytical mind, and an endless supply of smart ideas, but the individual still won’t make a great leader.... Effective leaders are alike in one crucial way: they all have a high degree of emotional intelligence.” (Goleman, Nov-Dec 1998)

Our focus is not on earthly success, but on living our lives toward the purpose for which God created us. It is not so important as to where we are, but where we are headed! We want to use our gifts and personality and intelligence in such a way that we honor God and others (Great Commandment). Emotional intelligence can help us link gifts, intelligence and personality to help us to live out the Great Commandment more effectively. And from God’s point of view, that is true success!

Raising our emotional intelligence will help us live out our life purpose (whatever it may be) as we

- learn how to honor God by expressing his love toward others and
- learn to relate to others and to serve and lead them more effectively.

What is Emotional Intelligence?

Emotional intelligence is being appropriately honest rather than merely being nice or polite. In biblical terms emotional intelligence is “speaking the truth in love.”

Emotional intelligence is an awareness of my own emotions and the emotions of others. It is much more than touchy, feely relationships. It is a self-awareness and “other-awareness” that frees me to really treat you the way you would like to be treated (sometimes referred to as the “Platinum Rule”).

Emotional intelligence is not about being emotional but about being deeply and appropriately in touch with your emotions so that you are able to use emotions for God and for others.

Emotional intelligence is about using your passions to motivate yourself and others. Emotional intelligence is about managing emotions. It is closely related to the fruit of the Spirit the Bible calls “self-control.”

A definition of emotional intelligence: the capacities “for recognizing our own feelings and those of others, for motivating ourselves, and for managing emotions well in ourselves and in our relationships”. (Daniel Goleman, 1998)

Why spend time talking and learning about emotional intelligence?

1. We learn about emotional intelligence because God is emotional.

In the Bible we see God expressing feelings like compassion, anger, sympathy, grief, patience, gentleness, and joy. Jesus got tired and fell asleep. He wept when his friend Lazarus died. He got angry when he saw worship being corrupted. The Spirit intercedes for us with groaning that cannot be put into words. By showing us a feeling, emotional God, the Bible affirms our emotions.

We feel because we are made in the image of God.

2. We learn about emotional intelligence to help us manage our emotions.

Feelings are involuntary. We can’t choose our feelings, but we can choose our responses -- the actions that we take in response to our feelings. I cannot control my momentary feeling of anger when I sense someone putting me down. But I can control how I respond to that feeling, whether I react in an escalating battle of words, or use my active listening skills to understand what the person is really trying to communicate about themselves as well as about me. The key is to attempt to understand what is going on instead of jumping to conclusions.

We can’t refuse a feeling any more than we can stop a bird from flying over our head. But, as Martin Luther said, we can prevent the bird from building a nest in our hair!

The Bible notes the distinction between feeling and response. The scripture doesn't say "don't get angry," but rather, when you get angry, don't sin. Anger is not sin, but our response to that anger may be.

In your anger do not sin. (Eph. 4:26a)

Go ahead and be angry. You do well to be angry - but don't use your anger as fuel for revenge. And don't stay angry. Don't go to bed angry. (Eph. 4:26 Msg)

We learn about emotional intelligence to prevent us from going to bed angry!

Joseph's brothers couldn't help feeling some jealousy toward their younger brother who was Dad's favorite. But there was no excuse for them allowing their jealousy to turn into hatred and then murderous rage (*Gen. 37*).

A part of love is feeling - often an involuntary feeling we describe as "falling in love." (This is the part of love most emphasized in popular American culture.) The Bible helps us see love as more than a feeling. It's also our response, our decision in response to that feeling.

But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God's holy people. (Eph. 5:3)

Don't allow love to turn into lust, setting off a downhill slide into sexual promiscuity, filthy practices, or bullying greed. (Eph. 5:3 Msg)

Understanding emotional intelligence helps us to be aware of feelings like jealousy or bitterness so that we can find healing and freedom before we respond to these feelings in destructive ways.

Emotional intelligence helps us to love intelligently.

3. We learn about emotional intelligence because it can help us live out the Great Commandment - to love others with God's kind of love (*agape*, I Cor. 13).

We care about emotional intelligence because it helps us worship God with our whole personality -- with our emotions as well as with our intellect. The Bible's worship manual, the Psalms, is an emotion-rich resource for our personal and corporate worship. Use it! Pray it! Paraphrase it!

*O Lord, do not rebuke me in your anger or discipline me in your wrath.
Be merciful to me, Lord, for I am faint; O Lord, heal me, for my bones are in agony.
My soul is in anguish. How long, O Lord, how long? (Ps. 6:1-3)*

*The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not be in want.
He makes me lie down in green pastures,*

*he leads me beside quiet waters,
he restores my soul.
He guides me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. (Ps. 23:1-3)*

*God, my shepherd! I don't need a thing.
You have bedded me down in lush meadows,
you find me quiet pools to drink from.
True to your word, you let me catch my breath
and send me in the right direction. (Ps. 23:1-3 Msg)*

Prayer Pause

In groups of two people, pray for one another using some lines from one (or both) of the Psalms above. As you pray, use feeling words. Try to be aware of your own feelings as you pray - feelings about yourself, feelings toward God, feelings toward your prayer partner.

We care about emotional intelligence because it helps us serve others. Christian ministry is about serving others. It's about relationships. Emotional intelligence helps us serve others intelligently. God wants us to be sensitized to the feelings of others, their needs and concerns so that we can love them enough to respond to those feelings, needs, and concerns appropriately. By doing so, God's love shines through us, through our confidence in who we are as children of God, and through our loving relationships with one another.

Obey them not only to win their favor when their eye is on you, but like slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from your heart. Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not men. (Eph. 6:6-7)

Don't just do what you have to do to get by, but work heartily, as Christ's servants doing what God wants you to do. And work with a smile on your face, always keeping in mind that no matter who happens to be giving the orders, you're really serving God. (Eph. 6:6-7 Msg)

Being more aware of our own emotions and the emotions of others helps us to be more effective peacemakers.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God. (Matt. 5:9)

Silent Prayer

In what area of my emotional life would I like to invite God's Spirit to increase my "emotional intelligence"? Ask God to begin that growth in you today!

Inventory of Spiritual/Emotional Health

We turn now to the Inventory of Spiritual/Emotional Maturity or Health. Pastor Peter Scazzero, author of *The Emotionally Healthy Church* where this inventory is taken from, believes that discipleship must take into account our emotional health or maturity.

Emotional maturity means that our inner world is in tune or in sync with our public behavior. As Scazzero puts it, "To truly love God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength (Great Commandment) requires that we know not only God but also our interior—the nature of our own heart, soul, and mind. Understanding that world of feelings, thoughts, desires, and hopes with all its richness and complexity is hard work" (Scazzero, p. 55).

Scazzero's inventory of spiritual/emotional health (in Appendix) helps us reflect on six principles that apply to us as disciples (and also to our congregations). As you prepare to take that assessment, reflect on the following principles and the guiding questions. Make any notes in the space below each question.

Principle 1: Look beneath the surface.

Are you in touch with your feelings?

Are you able to share your feelings with others?

How do you experience and respond to anger?

Principle 2: Break the power of the past.

What have you inherited from your family of origin? What strengths? What weaknesses?

How are you growing through your past toward God's intended future for you?

Principle 3: Live in brokenness and vulnerability.

To what extent would others describe you as broken, vulnerable and approachable?

How open are you to hearing and responding positively to criticism?

Principle 4: Receive the gift of limits.

How easy/hard is it for you to say no?

How easy/hard is it for you to set boundaries for yourself, and accept the boundaries others set?

How well do you balance family, rest, work, and play?

Principle 5: Embrace grieving and loss.

How easy is it for you to admit loss and grief? How well do you express your feelings?

Do people who are hurting come to you for a shoulder to cry on?

Principle 6: Make incarnation your model for loving well.

Do you like yourself? Accept yourself the way you are?

How well do you enter into the feelings and world of another?

Action: Take the EQ Assessment starting on the next page now, and then score it.

Emotionally Healthy Spirituality Personal Assessment for Emotional IQ

Please answer these questions as honestly as possible. Use the scoring method as indicated.

PART A: General Formation and Discipleship

- | | |
|---|---------|
| 1. I feel confident of my adoption as God's son/daughter and rarely, if ever, question his acceptance of me. | 1 2 3 4 |
| 2. I love to worship God by myself as well as with others. | 1 2 3 4 |
| 3. I spend regular quality time in the Word of God and in prayer. | 1 2 3 4 |
| 4. I sense the unique ways God has gifted me individually and am actively using my spiritual gifts for his service. | 1 2 3 4 |
| 5. I am a vital participant in a community with other believers. | 1 2 3 4 |
| 6. It is clear that my money, gifts, time, and abilities are completely at God's disposal and not my own. | 1 2 3 4 |
| 7. I consistently integrate my faith in the marketplace and the world. | 1 2 3 4 |

TOTAL _____

PART B: Emotional Components of Discipleship

Principle 1: Look beneath the Surface

- | | |
|--|---------|
| 1. It's easy for me to identify what I am feeling inside (Luke 19:41 – 44; John 11:33 – 35). | 1 2 3 4 |
| 2. I am willing to explore previously unknown or unacceptable parts of myself, allowing Christ to transform me more fully (Rom. 7:21 – 25; Col. 3:5 – 17). | 1 2 3 4 |
| 3. I enjoy being alone in quiet reflection with God and myself (Mark 1:35; Luke 6:12). | 1 2 3 4 |
| 4. I can share freely about my emotions, sexuality, joy, and pain (Ps. 22; Prov. 5:18–19; Lk. 10:21). | 1 2 3 4 |
| 5. I am able to experience and deal with anger in a way that leads to growth in others and myself (Eph. 4:25 – 32). | 1 2 3 4 |
| 6. I am honest with myself (and a few significant others) about the feelings, beliefs, doubts, pains, and hurts beneath the surface of my life (Ps. 73; 88; Jer. 20:7 – 18). | 1 2 3 4 |

TOTAL _____

Principle 2: Break the Power of the Past

7. I resolve conflict in a clear, direct, and respectful way, not what I might have learned growing up in my family, such as painful putdowns, avoidance, escalating tensions, or going to a third party rather than to the person directly (Matt. 18:15–18). 1 2 3 4
8. I am intentional at working through the impact of significant “earthquake” events that shaped my present, such as the death of a family member, an unexpected pregnancy, divorce, addiction, or major financial disaster (Gen. 50:20; Ps. 51). 1 2 3 4
9. I am able to thank God for all my past life experiences, seeing how he has used them to uniquely shape me into who I am (Gen. 50:20; Rom. 8:28–30). 1 2 3 4
10. I can see how certain “generational sins” have been passed down to me through my family history, including character flaws, lies, secrets, ways of coping with pain, and unhealthy tendencies in relating to others (Ex. 20:5; cf. Gen. 20:2; 26:7; 27:19; 37:1–33). 1 2 3 4
11. I don’t need approval from others to feel good about myself (Prov. 29:25; Gal. 1:10). 1 2 3 4
12. I take responsibility and ownership for my past life rather than blame others (John 5:5–7). 1 2 3 4

TOTAL _____

Principle 3: Live in Brokenness and Vulnerability

13. I often admit when I’m wrong, readily asking forgiveness from others (Matt. 5:23 – 24). 1 2 3 4
14. I am able to speak freely about my weaknesses, failures, and mistakes (2 Cor. 12:7 – 12). 1 2 3 4
15. Others would easily describe me as approachable, gentle, open, and transparent (Gal. 5:22 – 23; 1 Cor. 13:1 – 6). 1 2 3 4
16. Those close to me would say that I am not easily offended or hurt (Matt. 5:39 – 42, 1 Cor. 13:5). 1 2 3 4
17. I am consistently open to hearing and applying constructive criticism and feedback that others might have for me (Prov. 10:17; 17:10; 25:12). 1 2 3 4
18. I am rarely judgmental or critical of others (Matt. 7:1 – 5). 1 2 3 4
19. Others would say that I am slow to speak, quick to listen, and good at seeing things from their perspective (James 1:19 – 20). 1 2 3 4

TOTAL _____

Principle 4: Receive the Gift of Limits

20. I've never been accused of "trying to do it all" or of biting off more than I could chew (Matt. 4:1 – 11). 1 2 3 4
21. I am regularly able to say "no" to requests and opportunities rather than risk overextending myself (Mark 6:30 – 32). 1 2 3 4
22. I recognize the different situations where my unique, God-given personality can be either a help or hindrance in responding appropriately (Ps. 139; Rom. 12:3; 1 Peter 4:10). 1 2 3 4
23. It's easy for me to distinguish the difference between when to help carry someone else's burden (Gal 6:2) and when to let it go so they can carry their own burden (Gal. 6:5). 1 2 3 4
24. I have a good sense of my emotional, relational, physical, and spiritual capacities, intentionally pulling back to rest and fill my "gas tank" again (Mark 1:21 – 39). 1 2 3 4
25. Those close to me would say that I am good at balancing family, rest, work, and play in a biblical way (Ex. 20:8). 1 2 3 4

TOTAL _____

Principle 5: Embrace Grieving and Loss

26. I openly admit my losses and disappointments (Ps. 3; 5). 1 2 3 4
27. When I go through a disappointment or a loss, I reflect on how I'm feeling rather than pretend that nothing is wrong (2 Sam. 1:4, 17 – 27; Ps. 51:1 – 17). 1 2 3 4
28. I take time to grieve my losses as David (Ps. 69) and Jesus did (Matt. 26:39; John 11:35; 12:27). 1 2 3 4
29. People who are in great pain and sorrow tend to seek me out because it's clear to them that I am in touch with the losses and sorrows in my own life (2 Cor 1:3 – 7). 1 2 3 4
30. I am able to cry and experience depression or sadness, explore the reasons behind it, and allow God to work in me through it (Ps. 42; Matt. 26:36 – 46). 1 2 3 4

TOTAL _____

Principle 6: Make Incarnation Your Model for Loving Well

31. I am regularly able to enter into other people's world and feelings, connecting deeply with them and taking time to imagine what it feels like to live in their shoes (John 1:1 – 14; 2 Cor. 8:9; Phil. 2:3 – 5). 1 2 3 4
32. People close to me would describe me as a responsive listener (Prov. 10:19; 29:11; James 1:19). 1 2 3 4
33. When I confront someone who has hurt or wronged me, I speak more in the first person ("I" and "me") about how I am feeling rather than speak in blaming tones ("you" or "they") about what was done (Prov. 25:11; Eph. 4:29 – 32). 1 2 3 4
34. I have little interest in judging other people or quickly giving opinions about them (Matt. 7:1–5). 1 2 3 4
35. People would describe me as someone who makes "loving well" my number one aim (John 13:34–35; 1 Cor. 13). 1 2 3 4

TOTAL _____

Principle 7: Slow Down to Lead with Integrity

36. I spend sufficient time alone with God to sustain my work for God. 1 2 3 4
37. I regularly take a 24-hour period each week for Sabbath-keeping — to stop, to rest, to delight, and to contemplate God. 1 2 3 4
38. Those closest to me would say that my marriage and children take priority over church ministry and others. 1 2 3 4
39. I am not afraid to ask difficult, uncomfortable questions, to myself or to others, when needed. 1 2 3 4
40. I do not divide my leadership into sacred/secular categories. I treat the executive/planning functions of leadership as meaningful as prayer and preparing sermons. 1 2 3 4

TOTAL _____

INVENTORY RESULTS:

For each group of questions on previous pages:

- Add your answers to get the total for that group. Write your totals for each part and principle in the score sheet below section below.
- Next, plot your answers and connect the dots to create a graph on the diagram below:
- Finally, see the next page for interpretations of your level of emotional health in each area. What patterns do you discern?

ASSESSMENT TOTALS:	QUESTIONS	TOTAL
Part A General Formation and Discipleship	1 – 7	___/28
Part B		
Principle 1 – Look beneath the Surface	1 – 6	___/24
Principle 2 – Break the Power of the Past	7 – 12	___/24
Principle 3 – Live in Brokenness and Vulnerability	13 – 19	___/28
Principle 4 – Receive the Gift of Limits	20 – 25	___/24
Principle 5 – Embrace Grieving and Loss	26 – 30	___/20
Principle 6 – Make Incarnation Your Model for Loving Well	31 – 35	___/20
Principle 7 – Slow Down to Lead with Integrity	36 – 40	___/20

GRAPH:

	A		P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7
	28		24	24	28	24	20	20	20
emotional adult	23		20	20	23	20	17	17	17
emotional adolescent	17		15	15	17	15	13	13	13
emotional child	12		10	10	12	10	9	9	9
emotional infant	7		6	6	7	6	5	5	5

Interpretation Guide: Levels of Emotional Maturity

Emotional infant. I look for other people to take care of me emotionally and spiritually. I often have difficulty in describing and experiencing my feelings in healthy ways and rarely enter the emotional world of others. I am consistently driven by a need for instant gratification, often using others as objects to meet my needs. People sometimes perceive me as inconsiderate and insensitive. I am uncomfortable with silence or being alone. When trials, hardships, or difficulties come, I want to quit God and the Christian life. I sometimes experience God at church and when I am with other Christians, but rarely when I am at work or home.

Emotional child. When life is going my way, I am content. However, as soon as disappointment or stress enter the picture, I quickly unravel inside. I often take things personally, interpreting disagreements or criticism as a personal offense. When I don't get my way, I often complain, throw an emotional tantrum, withdraw, manipulate, drag my feet, become sarcastic, or take revenge. I often end up living off the spirituality of other people because I am so overloaded and distracted. My prayer life is primarily talking to God, telling him what to do and how to fix my problems. Prayer is a duty, not a delight.

Emotional adolescent. I don't like it when others question me. I often make quick judgments and interpretations of people's behavior. I withhold forgiveness to those who sin against me, avoiding or cutting them off when they do something to hurt me. I subconsciously keep records on the love I give out. I have trouble really listening to another person's pain, disappointments, or needs without becoming preoccupied with myself. I sometimes find myself too busy to spend adequate time nourishing my spiritual life. I attend church and serve others but enjoy few delights in Christ. My Christian life is still primarily about doing, not being with him. Prayer continues to be mostly me talking with little silence, solitude, or listening to God.

Emotional adult. I respect and love others without having to change them or becoming judgmental. I value people for who they are, not for what they can give me or how they behave. I take responsibility for my own thoughts, feelings, goals, and actions. I can state my own beliefs and values to those who disagree with me — without becoming adversarial. I am able to accurately self-assess my limits, strengths, and weaknesses. I am deeply convinced that I am absolutely loved by Christ and, as a result, do not look to others to tell me I'm okay. I am able to integrate doing for God and being with him (Mary and Martha). My Christian life has moved beyond simply serving Christ to loving him and enjoying communion with him.

Permission is granted for any purchaser of this book to make copies of this inventory as long as it is not changed or sold for a profit, and this credit is included: Taken from Pete Scazzero with Warren Bird, *The Emotionally Healthy Church: Updated and Expanded Edition* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009). For more information and further resources, contact www.emotionallyhealthy.org.

Five Components of Emotional Intelligence at Work

Five components of emotional intelligence that influence the way we handle ourselves and our relationships with others are shown on the chart below. Each component is more fully explained below.

	Definition	Characteristics	Bible Examples
1. Self-Awareness I Cor. 9:19-22	-recognizes and understands own moods, emotions, and drives, as well as their effect on others	-self-confidence, take limitations in stride -realistic self-assessment; knows strengths and weaknesses -self-deprecating sense of humor, no pretense	-Paul – his weakness
2. Self-regulation Gal. 5:23; Titus 2	-the ability to control or redirect disruptive impulses and moods -suspends judgment; thinks before acting	-trustworthiness and integrity -comfort with ambiguity -openness to change	-Joseph forgiving his brothers (he wept)
3. Motivation I Tim 4:8 Phil. 3:12-14	-a passion to work for reasons that go beyond money or status -pursues goals with energy and persistence	-strong drive to achieve -optimism, even in the face of failure -organizational commitment	-to Timothy -Paul – I press on to the goal; throw off everything that hinders (Phil. 3:12)
4. Empathy I Thes. 5:14-15; I Cor. 9:19-22	-understands the emotional makeup of other people -treats people according to their emotional reactions -sees from others' perspective -draws on own experiences with trials and failings, and with own need for grace and forgiveness	-shows care through listening -builds bridges of understanding and trust -willing to serve others -attracts and keeps team members	-Jesus – forgiving thief on the cross -Esther – caring for her people; needs of others -Jesus loved the young ruler
5. Social Skills Neh 2:1-6 I Cor. 9:19-22; Phil. 1:9-11	-manages relationships well; builds networks -finds common ground and builds trust	-effective in leading change -persuasiveness -good at building and leading teams -non-anxious presence	-Nehemiah – favor with King -Paul – All things to all people

Adapted from Daniel Goleman, "What Makes a Leader," *Harvard Business Review*, Nov-Dec, 1998, p. 95.

1. Self-awareness is the capacity to:

- Recognize your feelings as they happen
- Be aware of your strengths and weaknesses
- Feel good about yourself as a person
- Understand your values and goals

Self-awareness is the cornerstone - the foundation - that supports all the other emotional intelligence competencies.

A person who is self-aware will have a deep understanding of his own emotions, strengths, weaknesses, needs, and drives. She is neither overly critical nor unrealistically hopeful. He is realistic about his own ability and can be honest with self and with others. A person with limited self-awareness may take on more than she can absorb and tends to view any constructive criticism as a threat or a sign of failure.

Self-awareness Biblical example: Paul and his opponents

Paul illustrates this expression of self-awareness in II Corinthians 12 as he talks about some other leaders who oppose him, and his feelings about the damage they are doing to the congregation. He defends himself vigorously, but then remarks wryly:

I will boast about a man like that, but I will not boast about myself, except about my weaknesses. Even if I should choose to boast, I would not be a fool, because I would be speaking the truth. But I refrain, so no one will think more of me than is warranted by what I do or say. (II Cor. 12:5-6)

After describing how God has used him so magnificently, Paul notes that he has a handicap. But, he says:

That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong. (II Cor. 12:10)

Now I take limitations in stride, and with good cheer, these limitations that cut me down to size - abuse, accidents, opposition, bad breaks. I just let Christ take over! And so the weaker I get, the stronger I become. (II Cor. 12:10 Msg)

For discussion on self-awareness:

How would you rate Paul's self-awareness?

What evidence do you see that he is in touch with his emotions?

How accurate is Paul's self-assessment? How strong is his self-regard?

Talk about your self awareness. Where are you stronger? Weaker?

2. Self-regulation is the capacity to:

- build on the awareness of your emotions
- keep disruptive emotions and impulses in check
- to think and then act intentionally rather than reactively
- to work well under pressure, without losing control
- to be flexible and open to change

While the first step is self-awareness, the second step is to regulate those feelings and manage them so they do more good than harm.

A highly self-regulated person is free from being a prisoner of negative feelings, but finds ways to control them and to channel them in useful ways. He is able to create an optimistic environment of trust and fairness. A person who lacks self-regulation yields easily to impulsive behaviors and to temptations.

Self-regulation Biblical example: Joseph and his brothers

After burying his father, Joseph returned to Egypt, together with his brothers and all the others who had gone with him to bury his father.

When Joseph's brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, "What if Joseph holds a grudge against us and pays us back for all the wrongs we did to him?" So they sent word to Joseph, saying, "Your father left

these instructions before he died: 'This is what you are to say to Joseph: I ask you to forgive your brothers the sins and the wrongs they committed in treating you so badly.' Now please forgive the sins of the servants of the God of your father." When their message came to him, Joseph wept.

His brothers then came and threw themselves down before him. "We are your slaves," they said.

But Joseph said to them, "Don't be afraid. Am I in the place of God? You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives. So then, don't be afraid. I will provide for you and your children." And he reassured them and spoke kindly to them. (Gen. 50:14-21)

For discussion on Self-regulation:

Discuss Joseph's self-management, both from this passage, and also from other parts of his story as recorded in Genesis.

Do you see some or all of the five different components (p. 41) of self-management in Joseph's life?

In which element of self-management are you stronger? Weaker?

3. Motivation is the capacity to:

- achieve for the sake of achievement or a higher cause rather than in response to external rewards
- create challenges; keep on learning
- do a job well and with unflagging energy
- be optimistic in the face of obstacles and set-backs

We use our emotions or passion to motivate and inspire us. It is about visualizing the achievement of a goal and taking the necessary step to get there. A strongly self-motivated person accepts challenges and change and is more flexible.

Motivation Biblical example: Instructions for Timothy

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. (I Tim. 4:8)

Workouts in the gymnasium are useful, but a disciplined life in God is far more so, making you fit both today and forever. (I Tim. 4:8 Msg)

For discussion on Motivation:

How does spiritual discipline relate to motivation?

If I lack inner motivation, how much does that relate to what's happening in my relationship with God?

4. Empathy is the capacity to:

- understand another's feelings, needs, concerns, and behavior instead of just focusing on self
- see from another person's perspective
- thoughtfully consider others' feelings - along with other factors - in the process of making intelligent decisions
- "read" group dynamics and emotional currents
- understand and trust other people

When we have become more honest and intentional with our emotions, we are more likely to look outward. Empathy is a key component in Christian ministry because of :

- the increasing use of leadership teams
- the need to encourage, motivate, and mobilize every member to use and develop their gifts and passion
- the need to reach out to non-Christians in our neighborhoods

Empathy Biblical example: Esther

Hathach went back and reported to Esther what Mordecai had said. Then she instructed him to say to Mordecai, “All the king's officials and the people of the royal provinces know that for any man or woman who approaches the king in the inner court without being summoned the king has but one law: that he be put to death. The only exception to this is for the king to extend the gold scepter to him and spare his life. But thirty days have passed since I was called to go to the king.”

When Esther's words were reported to Mordecai, he sent back this answer: “Do not think that because you are in the king's house you alone of all the Jews will escape. For if you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance for the Jews will arise from another place, but you and your father's family will perish. And who knows but that you have come to royal position for such a time as this?”

Then Esther sent this reply to Mordecai: “Go, gather together all the Jews who are in Susa, and fast for me. 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, even though it is against the law. And if I perish, I perish.” (Es. 4:9-16)

For discussion on Empathy:

How did Esther show empathy for her people? Do you see evidence that she was in touch with their feelings, needs, and concerns?

How did Esther consider the feelings of others in making the decision about going to see the king?

5. Social Skills are the ability to:

- be friendly with a purpose
- to move people towards shared goals; creating group synergy in pursuing agreed goals
- find common ground with all kinds of people
- to lead and manage teams

A person with social skill draws on self awareness, self-regulation, motivation, and empathy to help the group achieve agreed goals. This part of emotional intelligence undergirds interpersonal relationships and leadership effectiveness.

Social Skills Biblical example: Nehemiah

In the month of Nisan in the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes, when wine was brought for him, I took the wine and gave it to the king. I had not been sad in his presence before; so the king asked me, “Why does your face look so sad when you are not ill? This can be nothing but sadness of heart.”

I was very much afraid, but I said to the king, “May the king live forever! Why should my face not look sad when the city where my fathers are buried lies in ruins, and its gates have been destroyed by fire?”

The king said to me, “What is it you want?”

Then I prayed to the God of heaven, and I answered the king, “If it pleases the king and if your servant has found favor in his sight, let him send me to the city in Judah where my fathers are buried so that I can rebuild it.”

Then the king, with the queen sitting beside him, asked me, “How long will your journey take, and when will you get back?” It pleased the king to send me; so I set a time. (Neh. 2:1-6)

For discussion on Social Skills:

From this passage and from what you know of Nehemiah’s story, talk about Nehemiah’s ability to manage relationships.

What can you learn from Nehemiah that could help you in managing your relationships in some particular situation in your life?

Building Emotional Competencies

Like leadership that is partly spiritually gifted, it can also be groomed and nurtured intentionally. Emotional intelligence increases with age: that is what we called maturity. It grows as we learn to govern our feelings, impulses, and drives. Emotional intelligence can be learned. The process is not easy. It takes time and commitment, but can be developed through practice and by getting feedback from others. We need to unlearn old habits and acquire new ones. But most of all, developing emotional intelligence grows out of the desire that God's Spirit places in us, and is reinforced by a mentor or an accountability partner. Here are some ways to increase your emotional competency:

1. Self-Awareness (keeping my bearings in Christ)

Though I am free and belong to no man, I make myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible. To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law), so as to win those under the law. To those not having the law I became like one not having the law (though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law), so as to win those not having the law. To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all men so that by all possible means I might save some. (1 Cor. 9:19-22)

...I didn't take on their way of life. I kept my bearings in Christ - but I entered their world and tried to experience things from their point of view. (1 Cor. 9:19-22 Msg)

- a. Learn to differentiate between thoughts and feelings
- b. Name your feelings; be honest with yourself
- c. Journal your feelings, not just observations and activities
- d. communicate and share your feelings with others

2. Self- Regulation

The fruit of the Spirit is...self-control. (Gal. 5:23)

- a. Learn the power of choice in dealing with emotions:
 - Emotional Position 1 - *I will act the way I feel.*
 - Emotional Position 2 - *You're going to act the way I feel.*
 - Emotional Position 3 - *I can't help the way I feel, but I can help the way I think and act.*
- b. Accept responsibility for choosing your own emotional responses
- c. Anticipate your own emotional "triggers"
- d. Reframe an irritating situation into a problem-solving exercise - focus on behavior and not the person
- e. Forget the past and work toward a better future

3. Motivation

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. 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, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus. (Phil. 3:12-14)

I'm not saying that I have this all together, that I have it made. But I am well on my way, reaching out for Christ who has so wondrously reached out for me. Friends, don't get me wrong: By no means do I count myself an expert in all of this, but I've got my eye on the goal, where God is beckoning us onward - to Jesus. I'm off and running, and I'm not turning back. (Phil. 3:12-14 Msg)

- a. Connect your goals with your calling, passion, and values
- b. Set vision and goals in front of you, especially when you fail
- c. Be aware of negative “self-fulfilling prophecy”
- d. Keep learning

4. Empathy

And we urge you, brothers, warn those who are idle, encourage the timid, help the weak, be patient with everyone. Make sure that nobody pays back wrong for wrong, but always try to be kind to each other and to everyone else. (I Thess. 5:14-15)

- a. Check your attitude towards others
- b. Learn skills of active listening
- c. Look beyond your own immediate concern and look out for others' needs
- d. In a group setting “tune in” to group dynamics and notice how it affects group participation
- e. Be willing to coach or mentor others
- f. Learn from your experience of trials, failings, grace, being forgiven, etc. to empathize with others

5. Social Skills

And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless until the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ - to the glory and praise of God. (Phil. 1:9-11)

So this is my prayer: that your love will flourish and that you will not only love much but well. Learn to love appropriately. You need to use your head and test your feelings so that your love is sincere and intelligent, not sentimental gush. Live a lover's life, circumspect and exemplary, a life Jesus will be proud of: bountiful in fruits from the soul, making Jesus Christ attractive to all, getting everyone involved in the glory and praise of God. (Phil1:9-11 Msg)

- a. Determine to build and mend relationships even though it takes time, especially for a task-oriented leader
- b. Involve others in brainstorming and decision-making to build consensus
- c. Try to put yourself and people at ease
- d. Be assertive rather than aggressive or passive
- e. Create a nurturing and inspiring environment
- f. Build accountability relationships (Find a mentor!)
- g. Ask for feedback

Bibliography

Emotional Intelligence, Daniel Goleman, (New York, NY: Bantam Books, 1995)

Working with Emotional Intelligence, Goleman, Daniel Goleman, (New York, NY: Bantam Books, 1998)

“What Makes a Leader?” Daniel Goleman, *Harvard Business Review*, Nov.-Dec. 1998, p. 93-102.

The Emotionally Healthy Church, Peter Scazzero with Warren Bird, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003)

Homework for Session Three

1. Repeat the “Dwelling in the Word/Journaling/Written Prayers” exercise each day (15 minutes or more).
2. During the week, read and review session 3.
3. Invite your mentor to come to Discovery 8 (and any of the upcoming sessions he or she is able to attend).
4. Read the article below by Conrad Kanagy on the next page.
5. Complete the Personal Purpose Check-up following the Kanagy article, below.
6. Complete the online DISC profile (<https://www.123test.com/disc-personality-test/>) before the next class if you have not already done so. Purchase the “extended test report.”

Personality Profile Systems: Some Words of Caution

Conrad L. Kanagy, Pastor and Sociologist

One evening over dinner, while discussing the pastoral activities of my day, I relayed to my wife and son the results of a personal profile that I had just completed in preparation for leading church members through a training course in the fall. As I began proudly explaining my various personality characteristics, my fourteen year old son responded with visceral irritation. The more I defended the results and the purpose of the personality profile, the more irritated he became. When I later pushed him further about the source of his response, he simply said, “I just didn’t like the way it sounded from the very beginning.”

As a sociologist and pastor, trained in all of the latest rational tools and inventories of the day, I had found the profile results interesting and potentially useful. So why had my son, always rather sensitive to things spiritual, responded so violently to this seemingly handy dandy tool for making me a wiser and more capable leader? Was God trying to reveal something to me about my reliance upon rational, human methods for discovering wisdom? I didn’t know, but found myself praying about it that evening and during the next day. And as I did so, I developed a list of reflections about personality profile systems that I have decided to include in my future leadership training efforts when such systems are a part of the training.

Although PPS’s (Personality Profile Systems) are valuable in helping us to define and understand our own unique qualities, characteristics, and traits, and although I see no clear reasons that they may not be used in helping us to learn more about who we are, they have several drawbacks and should be used with the following considerations.

First, an individual should not assume that the personality traits revealed by a PPS represent all of the qualities or characteristics that God intends that person to be or to reflect. An individual’s traits are due partially to one’s socialization and social experiences and partially to genetics - neither of which makes any or all of them necessarily desirable or justifiable. God has a destiny for all of us, and persons must not be held captive to their calculated personality profiles.

Second, PPS’s seem to affirm the value of all personality traits and characteristics - that is, there appears to be an assumption that all personality traits are equally valuable and desirable, but that our use of them in certain situations and settings simply needs adjustment from time to time. I would argue, however, that not all of the personality traits of an individual that a PPS reveals are necessarily desirable in any setting or are consistent with the Spirit’s desire for our lives.

Third, the results of a PPS can appear to justify or legitimize my particular personality tendencies, despite the fact that the Spirit may want to transform or even remove such tendencies. The fact that I have a Dominant personality type (using the DISC system) may simply serve to reinforce tendencies that God wants to temper. PPS’s fail to consider the power of God for transforming personality characteristics, traits, and qualities.

Fourth, the results of a PPS have the potential to affirm one's qualities as "objective" and unchangeable. In fact, many of our personality characteristics can change and need to be changed. PPS results may take on the validity of "social facts" that cannot be renovated or transformed.

Fifth, most PPS's do not use Scripture as a foundation for understanding or affirming particular personality qualities. For example, one finds no discussion of or help for nurturing the fruits of the Spirit as particular personality traits. God's preferred personality characteristics are not part of the inventory.

Sixth, assumptions of most PPS's are that we can and should use the information that we have about others (their profile) to manipulate them to do what we want them to do, such as respond positively to our authority or to buy a product we are selling. While there is nothing inherently wrong with better understanding other individuals, there is something wrong with using that information primarily to meet our own self-centered interests. Instead, this information should be used in the interest of the individual and the Kingdom.

Seventh, PPS's do not emphasize that the work of the Holy Spirit can change a person or bring insight. While the results of a PPS can be helpful, these results have much potential for error. The results and insights gleaned should be brought under the covering and authority of the Holy Spirit, asking that He use the information that we discover for God's glory and the glory of His Kingdom.

Eighth, consuming the results of a PPS feels similar to the feeling I suspect that our first parents had upon eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. There are several potential pitfalls of such knowledge: a) we can use this knowledge to deify ourselves and to set ourselves against our Creator, assuming that if we just have the right personality equation we can build a tower to the skies and become like the gods; b) we may come to deify human methods of self-understanding (such as the PPS) rather than the Spirit Himself; and c) the insight of a PPS may leave us feeling naked and ashamed of what is revealed with no avenue other than to cover ourselves, rather than leading us to seek the transformation through Jesus Christ for those areas that bring us shame. While self-knowledge and insight are often of value, they must not be treated as ends in and of themselves but rather as means to becoming more fully the person that God intends for us to become.

In conclusion, all of this is not to say that PPS's cannot be of great value or to deny that God works through multiple means. However, if they are going to provide more than mere human wisdom, they must be fully considered within the context of God's Word and His Spirit, along with an understanding of their sociological limitations.

June 6, 2003

Personal Purpose Check-up

What is God saying to me about my life purpose in my devotions?

What insights have I gained about God's love and purpose for me (in a general sense)?

What have I learned about myself with the various assessments to date?

What are my three most prominent spiritual gifts?

What is my passion?

What have I learned about my emotional intelligence that can strengthen my relationships with others as I use my gifts, personality, and passion to serve God and others?

If I were to write a first draft of my life purpose today, it might go like this. My life purpose is to...

4 Discovering Your Uniqueness

*What you are is God's gift to you;
what you do with yourself is your gift to God.*
Danish Proverb

*So in Christ we who are many
form one body, and each member
belongs to all the others. (Romans 12:5)*

*Each one should use
whatever gift he has received to serve others,
faithfully administering God's grace
in its various forms. (1 Peter 4:10)*

*God has given each of you
some special abilities;
be sure to use them to help each other,
passing on to others
God's many kinds of blessings. (1 Peter 4:10 LB)*

Objectives for Discovery Four

1. Understand the DISC model.
2. Develop an action plan to improve your social skills for effective leadership and relationship management.

Schedule:

Spiritual Discipline: Story Teller Imagination/Prayer of Faith

The Johari Window

The DISC Profile

Discussion in Pairs

Encounter Jesus through Storyteller Imagination/Prayer of Faith

Jesus was a brilliant storyteller. Through story and parable he helped people understand amazing things about God. He taught, encouraged, reproved, and excited his listeners with a variety of narratives. The New Testament authors continue that tradition, especially in the Acts of the Apostles. The Old Testament, of course, is chock full of dramatic narrative.

We are created in God's image. We have been created with memory, reason, will, and the ability to reflect and to transcend ourselves. We are also creative in our own right. One way we can experience God is by putting ourselves into the drama of scripture to see how Jesus related to people in their experience of conversation, healing, and transformation. By imagining ourselves in the stories of Scripture we can experience a deeper understanding of the text.

We can help others experience God through our own telling of stories and the writing of parables. For this session, you are encouraged to become more fully a part of the biblical story and to write your reflections as a parallel to the biblical story. Reflect on your experience of Jesus as you identify with the various actors in the story of Bartimaeus on the following page.

Then, as a response to engaging your imagination in both the stories of the Bible and writing your own stories, pray a prayer of faith. Certainly all prayer is done in faith but a "prayer of faith" is a surrender to God, a prayer of trust, most often in times when we are at our weakest. Jesus' declaration in the garden the night before his suffering, "Not my will but yours" (Lk 22:42), is a prayer of supreme faith in God. A prayer of faith expresses utter dependence and submission, believing our God is sovereign and good. The prayer of faith expresses trust

in God but also rest in God. When we do not even know what to ask or do not know the words to speak, we can simply pray for God's will to be done.

EXERCISE: *Storyteller Imagination/Prayer of Faith*

Spiritual Exercise: Instructions for practice in class and at home.

- a. Sit quietly for a few moments asking God to open your heart and mind to the scripture.
- b. Read the scripture (*see below*) aloud, slowly – one or several times.
- c. Close your eyes and imagine yourself being in this story as one of the following:
 - one of the disciples
 - one of the people who told Bartimaeus to “hush up”
 - one of the women following Jesus
 - blind Bartimaeus
- d. Now write out in your journal how you imagined the story unfolding from that person's perspective. Each day write another part of the story through the eyes of a different person.

So for example, when you consider the line, “*Many rebuked him and told him to be quiet,*” you might write out several explanatory lines for why people might have said this. Likely, the crowd represented many views for rebuking him: don't bother someone as important as Jesus; you're *just* a blind man; I am in a hurry and want to get home; you're blocking the road, etc. Then imagine the change of attitude by some in the crowd when word is passed, “*Cheer up! On your feet! He's calling you.*” Do your best to engage your story-telling creativity as you consider these different viewpoints.

- e. Before the next session, reflect upon what the Spirit has been saying to you through your storytelling imagination. To conclude the exercise, write a prayer of faith, expressing your trust in God.

Mark 10:46-52

Then they came to Jericho. As Jesus and his disciples, together with a large crowd, were leaving the city, a blind man, Bartimaeus (that is, the Son of Timaeus), was sitting by the roadside begging. When he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to shout, “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!”

Many rebuked him and told him to be quiet, but he shouted all the more, “Son of David, have mercy on me!”

Jesus stopped and said, “Call him.”

So they called to the blind man, “Cheer up! On your feet! He's calling you.” Throwing his cloak aside, he jumped to his feet and came to Jesus.

“What do you want me to do for you?” Jesus asked him.

The blind man said, “Rabbi, I want to see.”

“Go,” said Jesus, “your faith has healed you.”

Immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus along the road.

The JoHari Window

The JoHari Window helps people better understand the relationship with themselves and others.

Things that I know Public Self Things obvious to both of us.	Things that I don't know Blind Spot Things that you know.
Things that I know Facade (mask) Things you don't know (intentional or unintentional)	Things that I don't know Potential Things neither of us know

What Makes Us Different?

Differences in behavior are shaped by

- ◆ Personality
- ◆ Situation
- ◆ Habits
- ◆ Perception
- ◆ Motivation

Our behaviors are shaped by our differing perceptions in particular situations. Two people can perceive the same situation in very different ways, and respond quite differently.

Motivation—a key ingredient of our behavior

- ◆ You cannot motivate another person.
- ◆ Everyone is motivated.
- ◆ People do things for their own reasons, not someone else's.
- ◆ We cannot force people to act in a certain way. The best thing we can do is create an environment in which people respond to their own motivations.
- ◆ People should be held accountable and responsible for their own actions and performance.

• Remember that DISC...

- Is a language
- Is situational behavior
- Is a tool, not an excuse
- Is not meant to “pigeon-hole”
- Helps us learn about our behavioral tendencies in order to capitalize on our strengths – by using them repeatedly and appropriately to accentuate the positive.
- Is used in team building - by utilizing strengths from every member's behavioral style to enhance or augment overall team effectiveness and productivity.
- Is a tool that helps us to stretch or re-direct our behavior in various situations in order to meet the needs of another person. It is a short-term change of behavior.
- Is a tool to help us be aware of our limitations so that we can intentionally modify our behavior through a long term change - by repetition and follow through.

One Body, Many Parts

It takes all of us!

- Dominant
- Strong Will
- Independent
- Goal-oriented

asks WHAT questions

D

- Interactive
- Enthusiastic
- Expressive
- Optimistic
- Relationships

asks WHO questions

I

C

- Perfectionist
- Critical, asks hard questions
- Systematic, prefers certainty
- Detail oriented
- Delays decision until sure

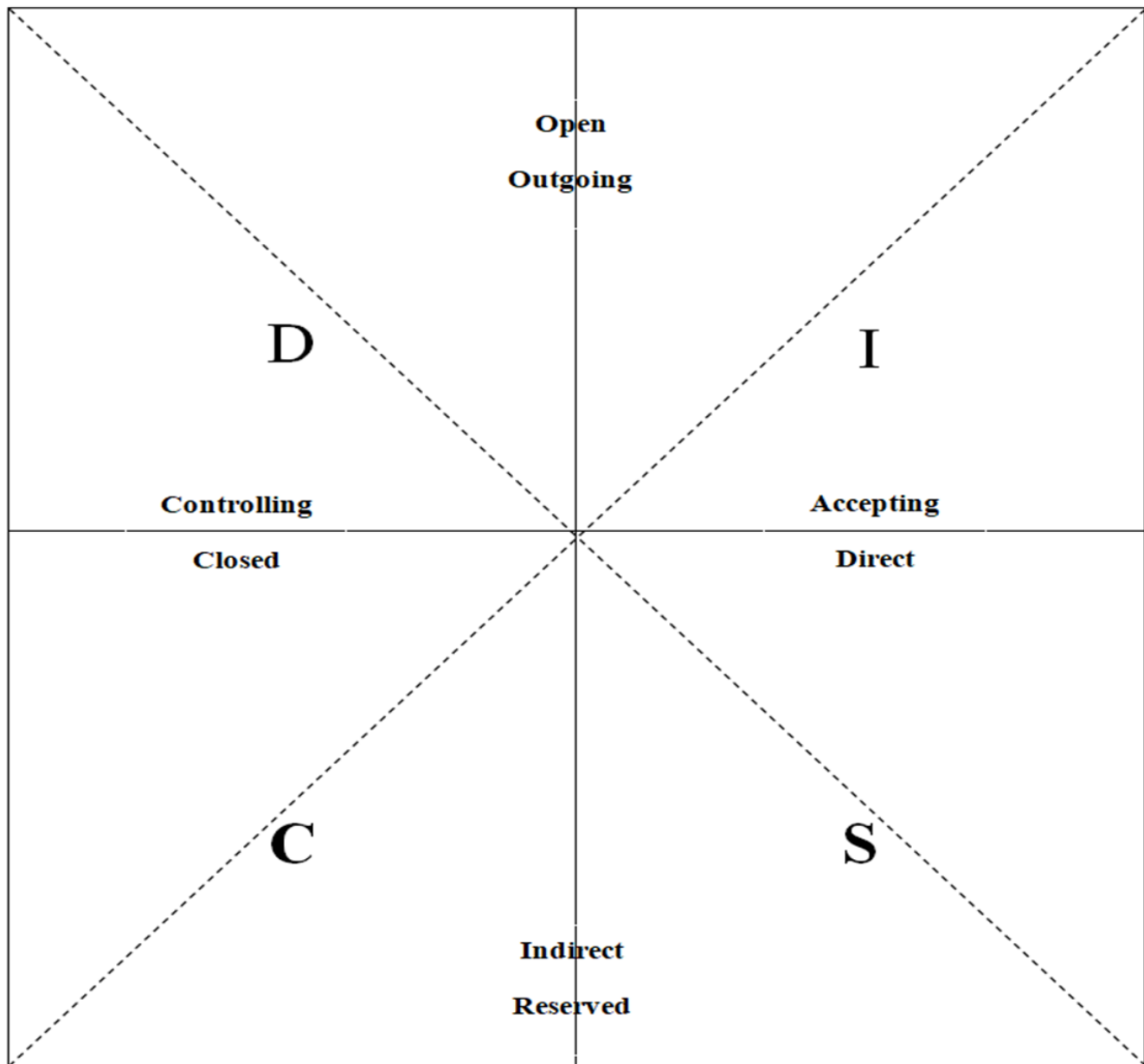
asks WHY questions

S

- Steady
- Stable
- Dependable
- Orderly

asks HOW questions

Personality styles can combine. This chart shows some common characteristics that mix and match.



Which two blended behavior styles can be...? Insert the DISC letters that answer each.

Controlling ___	Outgoing ___	Indirect ___	Direct ___
Open ___	Reserved ___	Closed ___	Accepting ___

D – Dominance

Emphasizes: shaping the environment by overcoming opposition and challenges

Tendencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-overcomes opposition to get results-needs action and variety-makes quick decisions-demanding-strong-willed-task-oriented
Motivated by	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-challenges, power, authority, results
Fears	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-loss of control-being taken advantage of
Under pressure	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-lack of concern for others
Oriented toward	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-make quick decisions
You will see	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-self-confidence-decisiveness-risk-taking
Limitations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-impatience-moving forward without considering outcomes

I – Influence

Emphasizes: shaping the environment by persuading and influencing others

Tendencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-optimistic-people-oriented-creates pleasant and motivational environment-sees other's point of view-works well with intangibles
Motivated by	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-social recognition
Fears	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-social rejection-disapproval
Under pressure	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-disorganized
Oriented toward	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-people-outgoing
You will see	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-enthusiasm-charm-sociability-persuasiveness-expression of emotion
Limitations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-impulsiveness-lack of follow through

S – Steadiness

Emphasizes: achieving stability, accomplishing tasks by cooperating with others

Tendencies	-consistent performance -team oriented -calm -patient -loyal -good listener
Motivated by	-maintaining status quo -sincere appreciation -cooperation
Fears	-loss of stability -the unknown -change
Under pressure	-overly willing to give in to others
Oriented toward	-likes structure and stability
You will see	-patience -team player -methodical approach -easy going
Limitations	-putting their own needs last

C –Conscientiousness

Emphasizes: working within circumstances to ensure quality and accuracy

Tendencies	-analytical -attention to standards, accuracy, & details -task-oriented
Motivated by	-correctness -quality
Fears	-criticism of their work
Under pressure	-overly critical of self and others
Oriented toward	-concern with standards
You will see	-cautious -precise -diplomatic -restrained -perfectionist -factual
Limitations	-indecisive because of a desire to collect and analyze data -creativity hampered by a need to follow rules

Behaviors and Stress

	Strength	Under Stress	When Pushed	Instead
D	Managing Deciding	Giving orders	Leave Withdraw	Listen Explain
I	Promoting Persuading	Overselling Attacking	Give in Guilt others	Stop, Check Organize Self
S	Steady Agreeable	Giving in Yielding	Angry Attack	Reach Out Tell Needs
C	Analyzing Checking	Avoiding Indecisive	Emotional Self-righteous	Decide Talk openly

Reviewing your behavioral tendencies

Use your DISC Personality Test Report to respond to the following questions. Completing this section will help you reflect on and appropriate your DISC results.

In section 2, “Your DISC Score,” of your DISC Report

Review the chart that locates your position on the dominance, influence, steadiness and compliance scales.

1. On the D scale, were you closer to composed/reserved or direct/competitive? Does your own self-reflection agree or disagree with this result? Circle one Agree Disagree
2. On the I scale, were you closer to factual analytical or social/outgoing? Does your own self-reflection agree or disagree with this result? Circle one Agree Disagree
3. On the S scale were you closer to impulsive/changeful or consistent/thoughtful? Does your own self-reflection agree or disagree with this result? Circle one Agree Disagree
4. On the C scale, were you closer to independent/uninhibited or conventional/reliable? Does your own self-reflection agree or disagree with this result? Circle one Agree Disagree

In section 3, “Typical Behavior,” of your DISC Report

1. Note here those descriptions from your DISC responses that describe what you consider a special strength in each of the four categories. How do those strengths help you work with others?
2. Note here those descriptions from your DISC responses that describe what you consider possible limitations. How they might hinder your effectiveness in your ministry or in team relationships?
3. Review section 3 carefully. Based on what you tend to like or dislike, what work habits are you most likely to embrace or avoid? For example, if you tend to “let others initiate action,” then you might avoid volunteering to suggest and to lead a new initiative. Note your observations here.
4. Are any of the work habits you identified currently a part of your environment? List below any work habits that might affect your ministry or team relationships. Mark those with a positive influence with a plus sign (+) and those with a potential negative effect with a minus sign (-).

In section 4, “Your Profile,” of your DISC Report

The various combinations of these four personality characteristics have 15 common combinations that show up with a very high statistical frequency. These common profiles have been given names. They are in alphabetical order: The Achiever, The Coach, The Counselor, The Creative, The Enthusiast, The Evaluator, The Individualist, The Inspirational, The Investigator, The Objective Thinker, The Perfectionist, The Persuader, The Practitioner, The Results-Oriented and The Specialist.

1. Note the profile your DISC report identified here. _____
2. Copy the keywords listed in your report in Appendix A of your DISC report for your profile here. Then circle those words that seem most descriptive of you.
3. In the explanation provided for Your Profile in Section 4, what items from your profile pattern might make your ministry or group more effective? Less effective?

Relating to People and Environment

From the content of your report and the responses to the questions above, make a list of suggestions on how you might become more effective. Write one or two action steps you could take to help you become more effective in your ministry, work, or family relationships. Keep these in mind as you prepare your Growth Plan in Session 8.

1. From Sections 5, 6 and 8 of your report, what are your most effective ways in relating to others in your ministry or work environment? What are some less helpful ways of relating in your ministry or work environment?
2. Based on all the information in sections 4-8, note here anything the report highlights about productivity, either positive or negative.
3. Based on all the information in sections 4-8, note here anything the report highlights about the way you tend to solve problems.

How my personality affects my ministry

Discuss in pairs:

1. How do the behavioral patterns you've identified from your personality profile relate to your specific ministry? How do they affect the way you work? The way you relate to others?
2. Talk about some specific situations where you've seen these factors at work.
3. Your profile indicates a "value" you bring to your team. What is that value? How does it enrich your team relationships? Do you think others are aware of that contribution? Why or why not?
4. Identify areas where you tend to "overuse." How do you see these "overuses" affecting your work or team relationships?
5. Your behavioral patterns also have an associated "fear." What is your fear? How does it affect your work or relationships?
6. Your personality profile also indicates areas for potential development—the "would increase effectiveness with more" summary. Discuss this feedback and how you could use it to increase your effectiveness in your work and relationships.

People from the Bible

Person	DISC	Description	Goal/Motivation	God's loving environment
Paul Acts 9:3-19	Creative High D & C	Direct, pioneering, analytical, fears failure	Unique accomplishments, control of self-selected projects	Provided direct instructions, opportunity to be church pioneer
Peter John 21:1-22	Persuader High I & D	Enthusiastic, social, dynamic, fears fixed routines	Recognition and authority, variety of status symbols	Publicly rewarded him with job; allowed flexibility in how he did things
Abraham Genesis 12-22	Agent High S & I	Patient, stable, concerned for others, fears conflict	Acceptance from others	Allowed him to work at his speed, supportive to Sarah, God was friendly
Moses Exodus 3-4	Perfectionist High C & S	Deliberate, precise, diplomatic, fears instability	Stable and predictable accomplishment	Explained clearly, answered all his questions, support - God and Aaron

Live out the Great Commandment...and Meet the Needs of Others

The Great Commandment, Matthew 22:37-40

Jesus replied: “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.”

The Great Commandment, Matthew 22:37-40 (Msg)

Jesus said, “‘Love the Lord your God with all your passion and prayer and intelligence.’ This is the most important...Love others as well as you love yourself...”

We love God first and from that love flows love for self (appropriate self-esteem) and for others (our neighbors). This quality of love the Bible calls *agape*.

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away. (I Cor. 13: 4-8)

Love never gives up. Love cares more for others than for self. Love doesn't want what it doesn't have. Love doesn't strut, Doesn't have a swelled head, Doesn't force itself on others, Isn't always “me first,” Doesn't fly off the handle, Doesn't keep score of the sins of others, Doesn't revel when others grovel, Takes pleasure in the flowering of truth, Puts up with anything, Trusts God always, Always looks for the best, Never looks back, But keeps going to the end. Love never dies. Inspired speech will be over some day; praying in tongues will end; understanding will reach its limit. (I Cor. 13:4-8 Msg)

Loving a neighbor as self involves discerning how to meet the needs (not necessarily the wants) of the other. As we do that, we often discover our own needs being met at the same time.

What does this have to do with our behavioral styles? Quite simply, it means that we are willing to modify, adjust, stretch and augment our behavioral styles in order to meet the needs of the other (often discovering that our own needs are met as we serve others).

Understanding Conflicts

- The fact that we are different makes conflict inevitable.
- One person's natural strengths can expose another's natural limitations.
- Conflicts are differences heated up!
- People do what they do, not because they are trying to do something to you, but for themselves!
- Conflicts can be our similarities in competition!
- Conflicts also occur when strengths are pushed out of balance.
- Remember the Golden Rule: *Do unto others as you would have them do to you.*
- Remember the Platinum Rule: *Treat others the way they would like to be treated.*

Develop a Relationship Strategy - for a particular relationship

Based on the information in sections 8, which profile is most unlike you. Note it here. _____

1. Go to <https://www.123test.com/disc-personality-test/> and select the profile most unlike you on the menu at the right of the screen.
2. Review carefully the information about your opposite profile. In the boxes below summarize your primary style and the primary style of the profile most unlike you.

My primary style (DISC)

His/Her primary style (DISC)

3. What could you appreciate about the other person's style?

4. In what ways do your styles conflict?

5. Now give some thought to a strategy to increase your ability to work with this person. Write your responses below.

Stop saying or doing...

Start saying or doing...

The charts on the following pages help you see how different personality types relate to one another. Review this material carefully. The Connections Planner shows different strong characteristics for each personality type.

Connections Planner

D – Dominance	I – Influence
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Be clear, specific, brief and to the point. Use their time efficiently.• Stick to business. Come prepared with all requirements, objectives, support material in well-organized “package.”• Present the facts logically; plan your presentation efficiently, concisely.• Ask specific (preferably “what”) questions• Provide key alternatives and choices for making their decisions.• Provide facts and figures about probability of success and effectiveness of options.• If you disagree, take issue with facts, not the person.• Motivate and persuade by referring to objectives and results.• Support, maintain, use discretion.• After talking business, depart graciously.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Plan interaction that supports their dreams, feelings, intuitions. Use time to be stimulating.• Use enough time to be sociable, yet fast-moving.• Leave time for relating, socializing.• Talk about people and their goals; opinions they find STIMULATING.• Don’t deal with excessive details; put them in writing; pin them to modes of action.• Ask for their opinions/ideas regarding people.• Provide ideas for implementing action.• Ask specific (preferably “who”) questions.• Provide testimonials from people they see as important or prominent.• Offer special, immediate and extra incentives for their willingness to take risks.• Continue supporting the relationship, be casual.

C – Conscientiousness	S – Steadiness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare your “case” in advance. Use time to be accurate. • Approach them in a straightforward, direct, but low-keyed way; stick to business. • Support their logical, methodical approach; build your credibility by listing pros and cons to any suggestion you make. • Make an organized contribution to their efforts. Present specifics and do what you say you can do. Take your time, but be persistent. • Draw up a scheduled approach to implementing action with a step-by-step timetable; assure them there won’t be surprises. • If you agree, follow-through. • If you disagree, make an organized presentation of your position and ask for their input. • Ask “why” questions. • Give them time to verify the predictability of your actions; be accurate, realistic. • Provide solid, tangible, practical evidence. • Indicate guarantees over a long period; but provide options. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start (briefly) with a personal commitment. Break the ice. Use time to warm up to them. • Show sincere interest in them as people; find areas of common involvement; be candid and open. • Patiently draw out personal goals and work with them to help achieve these goals; listen/be responsive. • Present your case softly, non-threateningly. Ask “how” questions to draw their opinions. • If you agree easily, look for possible areas of early disagreement or dissatisfaction. • If you disagree, look for hurt feelings, personal reasons. • Move in an informal, though orderly fashion. • Define clearly (preferably in writing) individual contributions. • Provide guarantee that their decision will minimize risks, and assurances that provide them with benefits. • Provide personal assurances, clear, specific solutions with concrete guarantees.

The chart below provides suggestions for strengthening the various personality types and softening some of the characteristics that can reduce the effectiveness of teamwork. Review this chart carefully.

Personal Growth Areas

<p>High D Dominant</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn to pace yourself better and learn to relax • Understand that other people's needs must be met in addition to your own • Understand that everyone needs other people at times • Accept the importance of limits and certain ways of doing things, even if you disagree • Learn to be an active listener • Attentive to member's opinions to reach consensus • Reduce control and forcefulness • Learn to accept others' opinions, feelings and needs • Express openly your support for your team members • Be friendly, let others get close to you 	<p>High I Influence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn more organized ways of doing things • Be aware of what others expect • Understand how to be more firm and direct when you don't like something • Accept the importance of completing work and meeting deadlines • Less impulsive; analyze strengths & weaknesses before making decision • Attentive to details and facts • Slow down and wait for other team members • Listen more and talk less • Take critique into consideration • Complete the task
<p>High C Conscientious</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn to put up with conflict and mistakes, and learn you can't always prevent them • Learn to speak directly and share your views with others • See how you can work with others who may have talents different from yours • Consider taking on a greater challenge or trying something new • Be more open to change • Be more social and have more direct interaction with others • Focus more on team goals and not procedures and details • Take initiative • Try to express your thoughts, opinions and feelings 	<p>High S Steadiness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn to handle unexpected change • Learn when to pass tasks to other people to get the result you want • Be more assertive with people you are in charge • Accept the change to grow by learning to do new and different things • Be more attentive doing the right things and not only doing things right • Expedite your response to achieve team's goal • Be more decisive • Dare to risk with team members

My DISC Action Plan — for general teamwork (review above material)

Now using your strongest personality type as the focus point (whatever your strongest trait, D, I, S, or C), give some thought to how you might work effectively with a person that is strongest each personality type. Develop a strategy in each block below. How will you act in order to achieve a more collaborative working relationship with team members who are strong in each of the four personality types?

With high “D” individuals	With high “I” individuals
With high “C” individuals	With high “S” individuals

Finally, note below one key idea you have learned from this session, and that you will commit to applying in ministry settings.

Above materials adapted from *Biblical Personal Profile System* (Inscape Publishing, Inc., 1997). Used by permission.

Personal Reflection

Review your DISC report looking for clues about your emotional competency. Respond to the following questions. Relate as needed to the Emotional IQ work you did in Session 3.

1. What do you learn about your emotional intelligence from your DISC report?
2. Do you get any indication of a strong emotional competency? What might it be?
3. What area (competency) of emotional intelligence has the greatest effect on my ministry? Why?
4. Which emotional competency would I like to focus on? How am I going to do this?
5. Who will hold me accountable (mentor me) for growth in this particular area?

D in the Bible

Profile Patterns	Biblical Role Models	Scriptural References	Descriptive Words and Phrases	Unique Gifts for the Church
Developer	Lydia Solomon	Acts 16:13-15, 40 Ecclesiastes 2 1 Kings 9:10-28		
Results-Oriented	Joshua Sarah	Joshua 1 Genesis 16 1 Peter 3:6		
Inspirational	Apollos Laban Stephen	Acts 18:24-28 Genesis 29:15-30 Acts 6 & 7		
Creative	Michal Paul	2 Samuel 6:14-23 Galatians 2 Acts 15		

I in the Bible

Profile Patterns	Biblical Role Models	Scriptural References	Descriptive Words and Phrases	Unique Gifts for the Church
Promoter	Aaron King Saul	Exodus 4:14-17 Exodus 32:1-6 1 Samuel 15		
Persuader	Peter Rebekah	Matthew 16 & 26 Acts 3 Genesis 24		
Counselor	Abigail Barnabas	1 Samuel 25 Acts 4:36-37 Acts 9:26-27 Acts 15:36-41		
Appraiser	David Miriam	1 Samuel 18, 16, 21 Exodus 15:20-21		

S in the Bible

Profile Patterns	Biblical Role Models	Scriptural References	Descriptive Words and Phrases	Unique Gifts for the Church
Specialist	Dorcas Isaac	Acts 9:36-38 Genesis 26 & 27		
Achiever	Martha Nehemiah	Luke 10:38-42 Nehemiah 2 & 3		
Agent	Abraham Hannah	Genesis 24 & 21 1 Samuel 1 & 2		
Investigator	Anna Jacob James	Luke 2:36-38 Genesis 29-32 Acts 15:13-21		

C in the Bible

Profile Patterns	Biblical Role Models	Scriptural References	Descriptive Words and Phrases	Unique Gifts for the Church
Objective Thinker	Luke Mary Ruth	Luke 1:1-4 Luke 1:26-58 Ruth 2:2-10 Ruth 3:1-18		
Perfectionist	Esther John Moses	Esther 4 John 19:26-27 Exodus 3, 4, 20, 32		
Practitioner	Deborah Elijah Jonah	Judges 4 & 5 1 Kings 18 & 19 Jonah 4		

Homework for Session Four

1. Repeat the “Storytelling Imagination/Prayer of Faith” exercise each day (15 minutes or more).
2. Before the next session, read, review, and finish any incomplete parts of Session 4.
3. Follow up on identifying a mentor. Invite your mentor to Session 8.
4. Work ahead on a first draft of your “Personal Purpose Statement” below. (Don’t worry, if it seems rough and unfinished, it is because it is unfinished! You will work more on this in coming weeks.)
5. Optional: Review and complete the exercises and questions in both “My Action Plan” and “Personal Reflection,” above, on how you interact with other people.

Personal Purpose Statement (first draft)

You may want to review your work on Personal Purpose Check-up, Spiritual Gifts, Emotional Quotient, your ministry passion assessment, and passion clarification.

My personal purpose is to (verb/action words)

using my (spiritual gift or gifts)

focusing on (passion and people group)

expressing (particular ministries that I have been involved with)

so that (what is accomplished)

My life scripture:

Do you have any passages of Scripture that you are especially drawn to or in some way resonates with you. Make a note of these passages here. Eventually you will be asked to select a life verse.

5

My Deep Gladness,

The World's Deep Hunger

*The place God calls you to
is the place where your deep gladness
and the world's deep hunger meet.*

- Frederick Buechner

*As you sent me into the world,
I have sent them into the world. (John 17:18)*

*In the same way that you gave me
a mission in the world,
I give them a mission in the world.
(John 17:18 The Msg)*

*However, I consider my life worth nothing to me,
if only I may finish the race and complete the task
the Lord Jesus has given me –
the task of testifying to the gospel of God's grace. (Acts 20:24)*

Objectives for Discovery Five

1. Discover more about where your deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet.
2. Begin working on a Personal Purpose Statement in class, and complete Draft 2 as part of this session's homework.

Schedule:

Spiritual Discipline: Personal Reflection/Prayer of Thanksgiving

Personal Purpose Statement

Spiritual Discipline: Personal Reflection/Prayer of Thanksgiving

Personal reflection requires deliberate and thoughtful pondering of the study materials that quicken and inspire you, using a method and frequency that motivates you to be your best self. The Bible is filled with examples of personal reflection. Most of the Psalms, especially those attributed to David demonstrate serious, deep reflection, often ending in confession, repentance, and prayers of thanksgiving. Ecclesiastes and Lamentations are immensely reflective in nature. The Gospels represent major writing projects that provide personal reflection from some of Jesus' closest associates.

Job 37:14 says, "Listen to this, Job; stop and consider God's wonders." That instruction to "stop" is really important. Reflection requires an intentionality to cease from other things and focus on something different for a time. Many places in Scripture we are commanded to reflect or "consider" or "give thought to." Personal reflection requires an act of the will to "stop and consider." Jesus gives such an instruction in Luke 12.

²²Then Jesus said to his disciples: "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat; or about your body, what you will wear. ²³For life is more than food, and the body more than clothes. ²⁴Consider **the ravens**: They do not sow or reap, they have no storeroom or barn; yet God feeds them. And how much more valuable you are than birds! ²⁵Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to your life? ²⁶Since you cannot do this very little thing, why do you worry about the rest?

²⁷“**Consider how the wild flowers grow.** They do not labor or spin. Yet I tell you, not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. ²⁸If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today, and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, how much more will he clothe you—you of little faith! ²⁹And do not set your heart on what you will eat or drink; do not worry about it. ³⁰For the pagan world runs after all such things, and your Father knows that you need them. ³¹But seek his kingdom, and these things will be given to you as well.

Jesus teaches his disciples to “stop and consider” creation, in this case the ravens and flowers, and reflect on how God’s care of creation relates to his care of human beings.

Psalms 51, ascribed to David after his adulterous and deadly affair with Bathsheba, shows serious self-reflection, a clear understanding of who God is and what God demands. Verse three and four say, “³For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me. ⁴Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight; so you are right in your verdict and justified when you judge. David also proclaims genuine repentance with concluding praise and thanks in verses 17-19.

¹⁷My sacrifice, O God, is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart; you, God, will not despise. ¹⁸May it please you to prosper Zion, to build up the walls of Jerusalem. ¹⁹Then you will delight in the sacrifices of the righteous, in burnt offerings offered whole; then bulls will be offered on your altar.

EXERCISE: Personal Reflection

Spiritual Exercise: Instructions for practice in class and at home.

- a. Sit quietly for a few moments asking God to open your heart and mind to the scripture.
- b. Read *Luke 12:22-31* (see above) reflectively several times. Stop and consider the ravens and the flowers and relate your reflection to your own personal life. Conclude your reflection with a prayer of thanksgiving.
- c. Until the next session, consider each of the following passages on sequential days (If you are not on a weekly schedule, just keep repeating the days until you meet again.). Each passage includes something for you to “consider” that you can use to begin the reflection.
- d. If you have started or are maintaining a journal, make an entry on your reflections each day.

Day One

Reflect on **the ways of the ant**, relate to your situation, and conclude with a prayer of thanksgiving.

Proverbs 6 ⁶**Go to the ant**, you sluggard; consider its ways and be wise!

⁷It has no commander, no overseer or ruler,

⁸yet it stores its provisions in summer and gathers its food at harvest.

⁹How long will you lie there, you sluggard? When will you get up from your sleep?

¹⁰A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest—

¹¹and poverty will come on you like a thief and scarcity like an armed man.

Day Two

Reflect on **God's deeds**, relate to your situation, and conclude with a prayer of thanksgiving.

Ecclesiastes 7 ¹³Consider what God has done: Who can straighten what he has made crooked?

¹⁴When times are good, be happy; but when times are bad, consider this:

God has made the one as well as the other. Therefore, no one can discover anything about their future.

¹⁵In this meaningless life of mine I have seen both of these: the righteous perishing in their righteousness, and the wicked living long in their wickedness.

¹⁶Do not be overrighteous, neither be overwise—why destroy yourself?

¹⁷Do not be overwicked, and do not be a fool—why die before your time?

¹⁸It is good to grasp the one and not let go of the other. Whoever fears God will avoid all extremes.

¹⁹Wisdom makes one wise person more powerful than ten rulers in a city.

²⁰Indeed, there is no one on earth who is righteous, no one who does what is right and never sins.

²¹Do not pay attention to every word people say, or you may hear your servant cursing you—

²²for you know in your heart that many times you yourself have cursed others.

Day Three

Reflect on **human oppression**, relate to your situation, and conclude with a prayer of thanksgiving.

Ecclesiastes 4 ¹Again I looked and saw all the oppression that was taking place under the sun: I saw the tears of the oppressed—and they have no comforter; power was on the side of their oppressors—and they have no comforter.

²And I declared that the dead, who had already died, are happier than the living, who are still alive.

³But better than both is the one who has never been born, who has not seen the evil that is done under the sun.

⁴And I saw that all toil and all achievement spring from one person's envy of another. This too is meaningless, a chasing after the wind.

⁵Fools fold their hands and ruin themselves.

⁶Better one handful with tranquility than two handfuls with toil and chasing after the wind.

Day Four

Reflect on **Jesus' suffering**, relate to your situation, and conclude with a prayer of thanksgiving.

Hebrews 12 ¹Therefore, 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, ²fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him, he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. ³**Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners**, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

⁴In your struggle against sin, you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood. ⁵And have you completely forgotten this word of encouragement that addresses you as a father addresses his son? It says,

“My son, do not make light of the Lord’s discipline,
and do not lose heart when he rebukes you,
⁶because the Lord disciplines the one he loves,
and he chastens everyone he accepts as his son.”

⁷Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as his children. For what children are not disciplined by their father?

Day Five

Reflect on **communal life**, relate to your situation, and conclude with a prayer of thanksgiving.

Hebrews 10 ¹⁹Therefore, brothers and sisters, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, ²⁰by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body, ²¹and since we have a great priest over the house of God, ²²let us draw near to God with a sincere heart and with the full assurance that faith brings, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water. ²³Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. ²⁴And let us **consider how we may spur one another on** toward love and good deeds, ²⁵not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

Day Six

Reflect on **who Jesus is**, relate to your situation, and conclude with a prayer of thanksgiving.

Hebrews 3 ¹Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of a heavenly calling, **consider Jesus**, the Apostle and High Priest of our confession; ²He was faithful to Him who appointed Him, as Moses also was in all His house. ³For He has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses, by just so much as the builder of the house has more honor than the house. ⁴For every house is built by someone, but the builder of all things is God. ⁵Now Moses was faithful in all His house as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken later; ⁶but Christ *was faithful* as a Son over His house—whose house we are, if we hold fast our confidence and the boast of our hope firm until the end.

⁷Therefore, just as the Holy Spirit says, “today if you hear his voice,
⁸do not harden your hearts as when they provoked me, as in the day of trial in the wilderness,
⁹where your fathers tried *me* by testing *me*, and saw my works for forty years.
¹⁰“therefore I was angry with this generation, and said, ‘they always go astray in their heart,
and they did not know my ways’;
¹¹as I swore in my wrath, ‘they shall not enter my rest.’”

Day Seven

Reflect on **your salvation**, relate to your situation, and conclude with a prayer of thanksgiving.

1 Corinthians 1

²⁶Brothers and sisters, **think of what you were when you were called**. Not many of you were wise by human standards; not many were influential; not many were of noble birth. ²⁷But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. ²⁸God chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things—and the things that are not—to nullify the things that are, ²⁹so that no one may boast before him. ³⁰It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God—that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption.

³¹Therefore, as it is written: “Let the one who boasts boast in the Lord.”

Discovery: Learning to Live on Purpose

1. Every Christian has the same foundational personal purpose.

At a basic level, every follower of Christ should be able to say something like this:

I want to honor God in thought, word and action, and through the Holy Spirit's power build the church of Jesus Christ, share the Good News with others, and extend God's government (kingdom) in the world.

This is the universal purpose shared by every believer, from Harare to Hong Kong, from London to Lancaster to Mexico City. Yet each person is a member of the Body of Christ, designed and called by God to a unique purpose to serve in the Kingdom of God. This is your purpose, God's assignment, your life mission.

2. You likely have been pursuing a personal purpose without knowing it.

Just because you never wrote down a statement doesn't mean that you have no purpose in life. Discovering your personal purpose means you are looking for something that is already there, it is simply hidden from view.

3. Identifying your specific purpose is not a one day process.

Finding your personal life mission is not an intellectual problem to be solved in one day or even one week. It takes time to fully grasp what God's plan is for your specific residence on the earth. God may take you through years of experiences, then, it all begins to add up. You realize that the pattern of your life is as unmistakable as the sun shining in the sky.

4. Your uniqueness is God's design.

God made no mistakes when he thought of you and built into you preferences for what you find appealing, the skills that you can do easily, ideas that you understand immediately. God gave you physical and mental gifts through your parent's genetic code. God gave you gifts through his Spirit when you surrendered your life to him. This design was so that you could carry out God's purposes.

5. Every God-given purpose is significant.

In our enthusiasm, we might be tempted to think that our personal purpose is the most important thing a human could experience. On the other hand, we might think ours is an unworthy purpose because it lacks glamour or public recognition. The fact is, every part of the Body of Christ is significant, every mission given by God is a worthy assignment.

6. Identifying a personal purpose is not an escape from complete surrender to God.

God is sovereign, and we are his willing, available servants. As Christians we claim Jesus as our Lord, our King of kings, our absolute ruler to whom we submit. Such a servant can never refuse a fresh call of God simply because it does not fit an old 1997 purpose statement.

Yet Scripture reveals many examples of how God consistently assigned people to specific tasks to accomplish his purposes throughout history. Discovering your personal purpose is not meant to restrict you, but to release you. It is a confirmation of God's uniquely designed assignment which you humbly receive and obey.

*The place God calls you to
is the place
where your deep gladness
and the world's deep hunger meet.*

Frederick Buechner

Biblical examples of personal purpose

1. Deuteronomy 31:1-8

How does Moses describe Joshua's personal purpose?

If I were Joshua, how would I describe my personal purpose?

2. Esther 4:11-17

What does Mordecai imagine Esther's personal purpose to be?

If I were Esther, how would I describe my personal purpose?

In table groups...

Read the scriptures, discuss them together, and then, as a group, write a personal purpose statement for each person.

1. **Jeremiah** (*Jer. 1:1-10*)

How does God describe Jeremiah's personal purpose?

Jeremiah might say, "My personal purpose is to..."

2. **Jesus** (*Luke 19:1-10*)

What does Jesus define as his own personal purpose?

Jesus might say, "My personal purpose is to..."

3. **John** (*Matt. 3:3; John 3:27-30*)

What does John describe as his personal purpose?

John might say, "My personal purpose is to..."

4. **Paul** (*Acts 26:12-18*)

What does Jesus define as Paul's personal purpose?

Paul might say, "My personal purpose is to..."

5. Peter (*Gal. 2:7-10*)

What is affirmed as Peter's personal purpose?

Peter might say, “My personal purpose is to...”

God is purposeful!

God is purposeful. It's hard not to see that quality of God when we look at the world – and the universe - around us. Purpose and design are even more apparent when we look at the way people think and live and organize themselves in communities and nations. We who are made in the image of God are purpose driven people!

In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will, in order that we, who were the first to hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory. (Eph. 1:11-12)

Because God is purposeful, we also ought to be purposeful. As Christians we live with the end in mind. We live with heaven in mind, with eternity always in view.

Now it is God who has made us for this very purpose and has given us the Spirit as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come. (II Cor. 5:5)

The Spirit of God whets our appetite by giving us a taste of what's ahead. He puts a little of heaven in our hearts so that we'll never settle for less.” (II Cor. 5:5 Msg)

Now we want to begin shaping a mission statement for ourselves. We've looked at our gifts, our personality and our emotions - especially thinking about how our emotions affect our relationships. As we look at the special way God has shaped us, we will begin to see a pattern and a purpose in that design. And that pattern will help us shape a Personal Purpose Statement.

Our Personal Purpose Statement will be an expression of our spiritual gifts, our personality, and the unique way that God's love is reflected in our emotions and in our relationships with others.

From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work. (Eph. 4:16)

He keeps us in step with each other. His very breath and blood flow through us, nourishing us so that we will grow up healthy in God, robust in love.” (Eph. 4:16 Msg)

Our Personal Purpose is a reflection of God's breath and blood flowing through us, “*nourishing us so that we will grow up healthy in God, robust in love.*”

Personal Purpose

Examples of Contemporary Personal Purpose Statements

Associate Pastor for Administration

I have come to realize that my personal purpose is to bring order out of chaos wherever the Lord chooses to send me.

A verse to help define this purpose is found in Genesis 1:2 - *Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.*

Church Planter

I believe God's call on my life is to gather scattered materials to establish foundations, bringing people together and inspiring them with vision so that new things are accomplished by God's people for God's kingdom.

My personal purpose is inspired by Haggai 1:8 - *Go up into the mountains and bring down timber and build the house, so that I may take pleasure in it and be honored, says the Lord.*

Overseer, Educator

As an apostolic pastor, I help birth new ministries, connecting people, their gifts, and the needed resources so that God's future is realized.

Life verse: *Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us. (Eph. 3:20)*

Overseer, Church Planter Coach

To be a spiritual father to many and an agent of congregational renewal.

My life verse is: II Peter 1:3 - *His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness.*

Teacher, Small Group Leader

By God's grace, my personal goal is to help set people free from ungodly strongholds in their lives through encouragement, intercession and godly cheerleading, and to teach others to do it as well.

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

Church Consultant

To help others to clarify their personal identity and to empower them to fulfill their role in God's Kingdom. My responsibility in doing so is primarily to my wife, associates in ministry, and to leaders of Christian ministries.

Farmer

My mission is to create the purest and most nutritious foods I can, so that people's bodies support their spiritual growth and ministry.

Medical worker

My mission is, out of the rich reservoir of love which God seems to have given me, to nurture and show love to others - specifically those who are suffering from incurable diseases.

21 year old female

To encourage and help those who are weary to lay their burdens at the cross and enter into true worship.

19 year old female

I feel called to love and enable children so that they can develop a positive self-image of the unique person God created them as and God's plan for their future.

23 year old male

To lead Christians (youth) closer to God through music and the word so that deeper relationships are built with God.

25 year old male

I purpose to serve Jesus Christ with all my heart, mind and soul; to bring others to Christ, to help lead youth into a personal relationship with Christ, and to love my wife as Christ has loved the Church, encouraging others to do the same.

28 year old male

My purpose is to put God first in my life; offering my time, physical strength, and mental ability to help others (both youth and peers) discover that Jesus is real.

34 year old female

To build up and encourage, through worship, hospitality, and prayerful words, my family, mission team, and brothers and sisters in the Lord.

31 year old male

My personal purpose statement is to integrate lonely and lost individuals into my circle of Christian friends by developing intentional friendships resulting in their inclusion into my Christian community.

28 year old male

To encourage and model stewardship/first fruits living in a materialistic western world.

Personal Purpose Assessment

Reflection Questions

Question 1: What is it that, when you do it, you sense God's pleasure?

- What gives you satisfaction - gives you a sense that God is delighted, that it furthers what is on his heart?
- What activity makes you feel alive and exuberant in your walk with Christ?

Question 2: When you faced adversity, what core convictions have you identified?

- What values come to surface repeatedly when you are up against a wall?
- What are the things that you are determined to do regardless of any hardship?

Question 3: What is it that you have worked tirelessly for regardless of financial obstacles?

- What have you sacrificed financially to accomplish because you felt so strongly about it?
- What is it that is easy for you to raise finances for because you feel it so worthy?

Question 4: What is it that other people most often seek you for help with?

- Why do they seek you? Is there a fruitfulness that accompanies you in that area?

- Why do they seek you and not just anyone else? What is unique about what you have?

Question 5: What kind of people do you feel called to serve?

- Identify ten people who you served joyfully during the past year.

1. _____

6. _____

2. _____

7. _____

3. _____

8. _____

4. _____

9. _____

5. _____

10. _____

- Is there a profile or pattern that describes these people? Can you group them in any way?

Now look at the list of people and/or groups below and identify those you feel the most concern (passion) for and desire (motivation) to help. If there are people you have a passion for, list them where it says “other”. After checking the ones that apply, narrow your list to the top three.

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> New Christians | <input type="checkbox"/> Empty Nesters | <input type="checkbox"/> Homebound |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Working Mothers | <input type="checkbox"/> Ministers | <input type="checkbox"/> Unwed Pregnant Women |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Couples | <input type="checkbox"/> Ministers’ Spouses | <input type="checkbox"/> Businessmen |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Divorced | <input type="checkbox"/> Children of Ministers | <input type="checkbox"/> Stay at Home Mothers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Teen Mothers | <input type="checkbox"/> Outdoorsmen | <input type="checkbox"/> Homosexuals |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Abortion | <input type="checkbox"/> Mentoring | <input type="checkbox"/> Illiterate |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sexually Abused | <input type="checkbox"/> Infants | <input type="checkbox"/> Missionaries |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Alcoholic/Drug Addicts | <input type="checkbox"/> Preschool Children | <input type="checkbox"/> Prisoners |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Poor | <input type="checkbox"/> Children | <input type="checkbox"/> Families of Prisoners |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Homeless | <input type="checkbox"/> Youth | <input type="checkbox"/> Unemployed |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disabled | <input type="checkbox"/> College Students | <input type="checkbox"/> Terminally Ill |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Children of Single Parents | <input type="checkbox"/> Singles | <input type="checkbox"/> Families of Terminally Ill |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neighbors | <input type="checkbox"/> Young Married Couples | <input type="checkbox"/> Ex-convicts |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Non-Christians | <input type="checkbox"/> Married Couples | <input type="checkbox"/> Nominal-Lukewarm Christians |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Business Women | <input type="checkbox"/> Senior Adults | <input type="checkbox"/> Disenchanted Christians |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aids patients | <input type="checkbox"/> Parents | <input type="checkbox"/> Adults with Adult Children in Crisis |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ethnic Groups | <input type="checkbox"/> Widowed | <input type="checkbox"/> Believers Married to Nonbelievers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> New Church Members | <input type="checkbox"/> Hospitalized | <input type="checkbox"/> Retirees or shut-ins |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Athletes | <input type="checkbox"/> Musicians | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |

Kinds of people I feel called to serve:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Question 6: Finish this sentence.

By the time I die, I want to have (been, helped, completed)...

Question 7: What specific Scripture verse(s) moves you every time you read it?

- What Bible verse or verses stir you to action in ways that others are not as impacted?

- What Scriptures have you treasured in the front cover of your Bible (or elsewhere)?

Question 8: What have personal assessment inventories revealed about patterns in my life?

Is this result similar to previous assessments?

- | | | | |
|---------------------------|-------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| • DISC Profile Pattern | _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| • List of Spiritual gifts | _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| | _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| | _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| | _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
-
- What have you discovered about the combination of your spiritual gifts and personality that helps you understand yourself, your ministry, and your personal purpose?

Question 9: What prophetic words have been spoken to you about your purpose?

Question 10: Which of these verbs is most exciting and purposeful to you? CIRCLE THREE.

As you write your personal purpose statement, consider incorporating the three words you identify.

accomplish	complete	educate	further	model	reclaim	stand
acquire	compliment	elect	gather	mold	reduce	summon
adopt	compose	embrace	generate	motivate	refine	support
admonish	conceive	encourage	give	move	reflect	surrender
advance	confirm	enable	grant	negotiate	reform	sustain
affirm	connect	engage	heal	nurture	regard	take
alleviate	consider	engineer	hold	open	rebate	teach
amplify	construct	enhance	host	organize	relax	team
appreciate	contact	enjoy	identify	participate	release	tell
ascend	continue	enlighten	illuminate	pass	rely	touch
associate	counsel	enlist	implement	perform	remember	translate
believe	create	enliven	improve	persuade	renew	travel
bestow	decide	entertain	improvise	play	resonate	understand
brighten	defend	enthuse	inspire	process	respect	uphold
build	delight	envision	instruct	practice	restore	urge
call	demonstrate	evaluate	integrate	prepare	return	utilize
cause	design	excite	involve	present	revise	validate
choose	devise	explore	know	praise	sacrifice	venture
claim	direct	express	labor	produce	safeguard	verbalize
collect	discover	extend	launch	preserve	satisfy	visit
combine	discuss	facilitate	lead	promise	save	volunteer
command	distribute	finance	loosen	promote	sell	work
communicate	draft	forgive	master	provide	serve	worship
compel	dream	foster	mature	realize	share	write
compete	drive	franchise	mediate	receive	speak	yield

Personal Purpose Statement (a new first draft)

You may want to review your work on Personal Purpose Check-up, Spiritual Gifts, Emotional Quotient, your ministry passion assessment, and passion clarification.

My personal purpose is to (verb/action words)

using my (spiritual gift or gifts)

focusing on (passion and people group)

expressing (particular ministries that I have been involved with)

so that (what is accomplished)

My life scripture:

Refer back to the earlier Question 7. Do you have any passages of Scripture that you are especially drawn to or in some way resonates with you. Make a note of these passages here. Eventually you will be asked to select a life verse.

Evaluating Your Personal Purpose Statement

Review your draft statement. Is it.... Revise it as needed on the next page.

1. Understandable to others?

- Is it brief and easy to remember?
- Is it clear to people what you are saying?
For example:
Unclear - *My purpose is to sanctify broken systems which implicitly cognate.*
Clear - *"My purpose is to organize activities to help other people serve effectively..."*

2. Relevant to your life?

- Does it describe the activity or goal which will compel you personally in the days ahead?
- Is it vague, something general about all Christians or is it specific and focused? *For example:*
General - *"My purpose is to serve God my entire life."*
Specific - *"My purpose is to help make newcomers to the church feel accepted so they experience growth through Christian fellowship."*

3. Worthy of Christ?

- Does it describe something of honor to God's kingdom?
For example:
Unworthy - *"My purpose is to promote white race domination over other races."*
Worthy - *"My purpose is to get homeless families to a place of safe shelter so their bodies are protected and they can experience Christ's love for them."*

4. Durable over time?

- Does it identify something that will keep you busy for five years? Ten years? or more?
For example:
Shortsighted - *"My personal purpose is to get married next summer."*
Durable - *"My purpose is to help my spouse and children release their God-given gifts so that they fulfill their purpose in God's kingdom."*

5. Believable?

- Is reasonable to think that it could be accomplished by one person?
For example:
Unrealistic - *My personal purpose is to start five 10,000 member churches.*
Believable - *My purpose is to gather believers into new churches wherever God leads so that new believers grow in Christ.*

Personal Purpose Statement (second draft)

My personal purpose is to (verb/action words)

using my (spiritual gift or gifts)

focusing on (passion and people group)

expressing (particular ministries that I have been involved with)

so that (what is accomplished)

My life scripture:

Further Testing

Names of three people with whom I will share this statement for reflection and feedback:

- | | |
|----------|-------------------|
| 1. _____ | Date shared _____ |
| 2. _____ | Date shared _____ |
| 3. _____ | Date shared _____ |

Materials adapted from David Witmer and from Finding Your Place in Life and Ministry, an assessment tool from Place Ministries, Oklahoma City, OK.

Books you'll find helpful in reflecting further on your personal purpose...

How to Find Your Mission in Life, Richard Bolles (Ten Speed Press, 2000). This is a great little book to help you think deeper and harder about why you're here (why God made you), and what you're going to do about it.

What Color Is Your Parachute? 2003, Richard Bolles (Ten Speed Press, rev. 2002). Written by a former Episcopal pastor who has a strong sense of vocation, this small book will help clarify your sense of calling in relationship to your work. Workbook available.

Living the Life You Were Meant to Live, Tom Paterson (Thomas Nelson, 1998). Based on Paterson's work with corporate executives and pastors in helping them determine their life plan based on who God created them to be. It is a good mix of practical exercises and encouragement. Good for pastors and others involved in ministry.

Your Ministry's Next Chapter: The Best Is Yet to Come, Gary Fenton (Bethany House, 1999). Pastor Fenton's book addresses pastors at midlife. It is an encouraging book that guides pastors to realize the fruitfulness during the latter half of their ministry.

At Home in Mitford, Jan Karon (Penguin, 1996) Good if you like novels! This is the first book in the Mitford series about a rector in a small town in North Carolina. Perhaps a saccharin view of ministry, but one that can help you see the great blessing of being a pastor/servant leader (if you're having doubts). It helps pastors realize the great impact they can have on a town.

The Power of the Call, Henry Blackaby, Henry Brandt and Kerry Skinner (Broadman, 1997). Helps you get a sense of the great value of ministry. Filled with lots of scriptures and exercises. If you enjoy scriptural exposition, mixed with personal stories of the authors, you'll like this book.

God's Call: The Cornerstone of Effective Ministry, Neil Knierim and Yvonne Burrage (Lifeway Press). About the call to ministry, written for young people.

Halftime: How to Make Sure Your Best Years Are Still Ahead of You, Bob Buford (Zondervan, 2000). Excellent book for persons at mid-life, whether or not you're having a crisis. Focuses on mid-course assessment and inventory. Effectiveness may mean redirecting ourselves into even greater service. Participant's and Leader's guides available.

Game Plan, Bob Buford (Zondervan, 2000). After the mid-life assessment (previous book by Buford), this book provides help for planning the second half.

Purpose-Driven Life, Rick Warren (Zondervon, 2002). Teaches people to look to God and his eternal purposes to discover the real meaning and significance for their life.

Homework for Session Five

1. Repeat the “Personal Reflection/Prayer of Thanksgiving” exercise each day (15 minutes or more).
2. During the week, read and review session 5.
3. Follow up on identifying a mentor. Invite your mentor to Session 8.
4. Work on the second draft of your Personal Purpose Statement above and your life verse.
5. Make sure you have a Bible with you for use in class at the next session to consider a Life Verse.
6. Share your Personal Purpose Statement above with three other people to get their feedback. You might ask the same people who evaluated your spiritual gifts.

6 Putting it all Together

*In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness.
We do not know what we ought to pray for,
but the Spirit himself intercedes for us
with groans that words cannot express.
And he who searches our hearts
knows the mind of the Spirit,
because the Spirit intercedes for the saints
in accordance with God's will.*

*And we know that in all things
God works for the good of those who love him,
who have been called according to his purpose.
For those God foreknew he also predestined
to be conformed to the likeness of his Son,
that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.*

Romans 8:26-29

Objectives for Discovery Six

1. Practice the spiritual disciplines of petition and intercession.
2. Review Passion Statement and Personal Purpose Statement with your table group.
3. Learn about creating Growth Plans.

Schedule:

Spiritual Discipline: Petition/Intercession

Passion and Personal Purpose Statement Review

- A. 1) Each person has three minutes to present his/her passion statement (See Session 2, p. 28-31 and Session 3, p. 48.) to his/her table group and explain it to them. (Spiritual Gifts summary is on p. 18 and DISC profile summary is on p. 70.)
- 2) Table group has two minutes to ask clarifying questions and affirm the parts of the statement that make sense.
- B. 1) Each person has five minutes to present his/her Personal Purpose Statement, second draft (See Session 5, p. 110) to his/her table group and explain it to them. Why did you make the revisions you made?
- 2) Table group has two minutes to ask clarifying questions (and affirm the parts of the statement that make sense).

Introduction to Growth Plan

Petition/Intercession: Asking of God

To intercede for others is a high calling and a major challenge. When we petition God on behalf of another we join with Jesus in his priestly work (Heb. 7:25) and participate with God's care and desire for that person. True intercession requires discernment of God's desires as well as our own. For this, we need to keep listening and asking.

Intercession also requires persistence. Jesus said, "ask, and it shall be given to you, seek and you will find, knock and it shall be opened to you." Jesus recognized that intercession will often test our faith and our faithfulness. In Luke 18:7-8, Jesus tells us each of his children has a very special place in God's heart and encourages us to keep bringing our concerns in prayer.

Intercession can take many forms but one way to intercede is to join our hands and imagine holding the person or concern before God and simply ask God to touch, heal, renew, etc. as we wait before God for a time each day. Often intercession is not only asking but also waiting or lingering before God on behalf of another.

EXERCISE: PETITION/INTERCESSION

Spiritual Exercise: Instructions for practice in class and at home.

- a. Sit quietly for a few moments. Ask God to open your heart and mind to the scripture.
- b. Read aloud & reflect on any one of the passages below each day.
- c. Drawing from your reflection on scripture, name a particular request you want to bring to God. Perhaps your request relates to your discovery and calling as it continues to unfold.
- d. For a few moments, in an attitude receipt, hold your request in silence before God. Then listen for any response from God.
- e. Write about this experience in your journal. What does God seem to “be saying” to you?
- f. Do this each day with the same or different request.

Matthew 7:7-12 (Father’s Heart)

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

Which of you, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him! So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets.

Luke 18:1-8 (Persistent Widow)

Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up. He said: “In a certain town there was a judge who neither feared God nor cared about men. And there was a widow in that town who kept coming to him with the plea, ‘Grant me justice against my adversary.’

“For some time he refused. But finally he said to himself, ‘Even though I don’t fear God or care about men, yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will see that she gets justice, so that she won’t eventually wear me out with her coming!’”

And the Lord said, “Listen to what the unjust judge says. And will not God bring about justice for his chosen ones, who cry out to him day and night? Will he keep putting them off? I tell you, he will see that they get justice, and quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?”

Ephesians 3:14-21 (Intercession and God’s Power)

For this reason I kneel before the Father, from whom his whole family in heaven and on earth derives its name. I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and

established in love, may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge - that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.

Philippians 4:4-7 (Trust)

Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Review

So far in the Discovery process we've deepened our understanding of intentional growth through spiritual disciplines, spiritual gifts, and emotional health.

In Discovery Session 4 we focused on our personalities, the unique way God has put each of us together so that we complement each other in the body of Christ, and so that we can serve one another effectively. We learned that we cannot love others without loving ourselves. We cannot love ourselves without loving others. The Great Commandment is a description of this divine "inner logic" in the way we are made, the way human community works, and the way we live together and serve each other in the body of Christ.

In the past couple weeks, you drafted a Personal Purpose Statement - a beginning description of who God is calling you to be and what he is calling you to do. You may have found that it wasn't easy writing your personal purpose on paper. How can you possibly capture the richness of God's creation, God's future for you, in a few short sentences? And you may have wondered, what are we going to do with this Personal Purpose Statement? Well, we're going to build a plan that will help you move, slowly but surely, toward your personal purpose. Aren't you glad you came?

Begin with the end in mind. Begin with a plan.

You've probably heard it said that if you fail to plan, you plan to fail. It's certainly true that if you don't know where you're going any road will take you there. A plan is important when we travel, when we build a home, and when we do God's work.

God is the master designer, a meticulous planner. He gives careful attention to details. If you doubt that, re-read the books of Exodus and Leviticus. Or the Book of Ephesians where God...

thought of everything, provided for everything we could possibly need, letting us in on the plans he took such delight in making. He set it all out before us in Christ, a long-range plan in which everything would be brought together and summed up in him, everything in deepest heaven, everything on planet earth. (Eph. 1:8-10 Msg)

We plan because we're made in the image of God. God wired us that way. God made us people with a capacity for planning. Just like God, we begin with the end in mind. "All things are created twice" - first in your mind and then in a physical, visible way. You create a house in your mind, and then sketch it into a plan or blueprint, before you pour the foundation or hammer the first nail. You create your garden in your mind before you drop the first seeds into the soil. You have already baked the cake in your mind before you begin measuring the ingredients into the mixing bowl.

We plan because God made us that way. And because God made the world, and the universe, a place that responds and reverberates to purpose and planning.

And yet sometimes we approach our spiritual lives, our relationship with God, with much less planning and discipline than other parts of our lives. Do we consider our spiritual lives too sacred for the mundane work of planning? Are we afraid God will be offended if we begin to be intentional and to organize our time with him? Are other people offended when we take them seriously enough to plan our time with them? Is our spouse offended when we plan a special time together?

On Sunday as well as on Monday, in our spiritual lives as well as in our workaday lives, we need to plan. We need to begin with the end in mind. We need a growth plan.

What is a Growth Plan?

A growth plan is a plan to grow. It is a map that guides us toward the future God intends for us. It is a guide to godliness, a blueprint for building Christian character.

A growth plan is an intentional, self-designed learning program with clear and specific learning goals linking appropriate learning strategies and resources, that helps a person grow in character and competence.

A growth plan helps us grow like Jesus grew

...in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men. (Luke 2:52)

Jesus became wise, and he grew strong. God was pleased with him and so were the people. (Luke 2:52 CEV)

Nature of a Growth Plan

1. **It is goal oriented.** “If you don’t know where you’re going, any road will take you there.” A traveler is going somewhere. Side trips along the way are fun, but the destination is always kept in mind.
2. **It grows out of your personal purpose statement.** Your Growth Plan is designed to help you fulfill the purpose for which God created you. Your Personal Purpose Statement is a description of *who* God is calling you to be and *what* God is calling you to do.
3. **It can be simple at the beginning.** An effective Growth Plan can be quite simple, especially in its beginning stages.
4. **It is flexible.** A plan is a plan! A plan is a tool to guide us toward a goal. It is not an unbending law. The destination sometimes changes as the journey progresses. The point is the goal, not the plan!
5. **It is always unfolding.** One learning experience, when it increases effectiveness and satisfaction in ministry, can lead to another and then another.
6. **It focuses on four dimensions of growth: being, knowing, doing, and leading.** It helps you think about your spiritual growth, your relationship with God. It also helps you grow in understanding the Bible and how it shapes your life, relationships and work. And your Growth Plan will help you be more effective in some specific area of ministry, and to grow as a servant leader.
7. **It is a year-long plan.** One year gives you time to include a variety of larger and smaller learning experiences, and to develop a strong, encouraging relationship with your mentor. It also provides a time frame that allows you to include some growth experiences that may not be so easy to arrange or schedule.
8. **It includes at least one major learning goal during the year.** A major learning goal is one of sufficient length and intensity to result in a substantial gain in competence. It involves a series of learning activities that lead to observable growth and mastery of a ministry skill.

Examples of major learning goals:

- a) a guided reading program making use of study guides and scheduled discussions with a mentor;
 - b) a workshop or seminar with clear goals for both outcomes and expectations for life application;
 - c) a college or seminary course.
9. **It is supported and guided by a mentoring relationship.** To stay on course with your Growth Plan, you need a mentor to encourage, pray for, and challenge you. You need a person to look you in the eye every month and ask, “How’s it going? Where is your joy? Your frustration? How can I help? How can I pray for you?”

10. It is reviewed annually. Your mentor will help you review your Growth Plan annually so that you are able to keep focused on your Personal Purpose. This review also allows you to “refresh” your Growth Plan, to make sure that it’s relevant, doable, and in tune with what God is doing in your life.

Your Growth Plan will help you become a **life-long learner** - open to God, to yourself, to others, and to the world in which God invites you to serve.

Steps to Developing a Growth Plan

There are five important steps in developing a Growth Plan.

Step 1 - Discovery

The entire Discovery process is aimed at helping you to shape a Growth Plan. You’ve been developing a Growth Plan for the past five weeks, so you’re well on the way! The Discovery process has helped you look at yourself and how God made you - your spiritual gifts, personality, emotional competencies, relationships, experiences, strengths and weaknesses. It has helped you become more aware of God, yourself, and others.

God has been shaping in you a new awareness of his design, his purpose, in creating you. You’ve gained new confidence that your being here is no accident, and that there are some magnificent reasons why you live, worship, love, work, and play. You’ve also deepened your understanding of the unique person God created you to be. You’ve listened hard for new insights about your purpose or “calling” - that special reason why God created you at this time and place. And you’ve shaped at least a first draft of your Personal Purpose Statement, including a life verse (a scripture that relates to your Personal Purpose).

Step 2 - Understanding Four Growth Areas

There are four important growth areas essential to achieving our Personal Purpose - being, knowing, doing and leading.

Being is the area of growth related to self and to character. It involves our relationship with God, with others, and to our calling from God. We want to grow closer to God and to have that relationship shape every other part of our lives. In the area of being we talk about “formation” - spiritual, relational and vocational formation.

Knowing has to do with our understanding of the Bible and how it applies to every part of our life. Throughout our lives we continue to grow in our knowledge and understanding of God’s Word and how it shapes our lives, our work, and our world. The “knowing” section of the Growth Plan may also include learning experiences related to the history of the church (Anabaptist history, theology and polity), and understanding the world in which we are called to live and serve.

Every Growth Plan will include at least one goal related to the Bible and how we can deepen our understanding of God’s Word. Some Growth Plans will also include “knowing” goals related to some

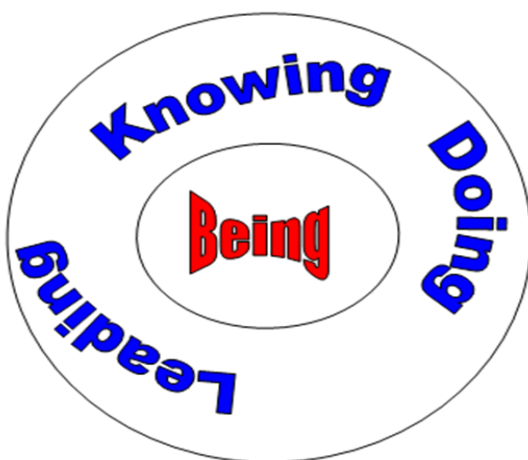
specific aspect of theology or Christian truth. This could be a book you want to read and discuss with your mentor. Or it could be a course you want to take to expand your awareness of how God is at work in the world.

Doing relates to serving others, to our ministry. We use our spiritual gifts to serve others, both in the church and in the community. Our growth goals in the “doing” area will be shaped by our spiritual gifts and our particular ministries in congregation and community. Growth experiences in the “doing” area will be practical, hands-on, and skills-oriented.

Leading is the area of our Growth Plan that relates to leadership skills, the way we influence others toward God - habits or practices that contribute to effective servant leadership. Five leadership practices that have been identified in recent years are the following:

- **Challenge the process** - search out challenging, positive opportunities to change, grow, innovate, and improve. (You want to change the way your small group does Bible study.)
- **Inspire a shared vision** - enlist others in a common vision by appealing to their values, interests, hopes, and dreams. (How can I help others value changing the Bible study method?)
- **Empower others for ministry** - build trust by providing choice, sharing work with others, and offering support. (Invite others to help you in modeling a new way of doing Bible study.)
- **Model the way** - set an example by behaving in ways consistent with shared values. Promote progress and build commitment. (Demonstrate a new way of doing Bible study to your small group. Lead by example.)
- **Encourage the heart** - recognize contributions of others and celebrate successes. (Help the group recognize and celebrate the positive results from the changes the group is making in its Bible study approach.)

Of these four growth areas - being, knowing, doing, leading - being is central and foundational for the others since it relates to who we are in relationship to God, shaping everything else we do as Christian disciples and leaders. We can diagram it like this:



Being influences our leading – blind spots, facing limits

Being influences our knowledge – knowledge is formed by experience.

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge. (Prov. 1:7)

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. (Prov. 9:10)

Being influences our doing – our behavior shows our character.

Step 3 - What am I going to learn? (destination or goal)

Your Growth Plan will include one or more growth or learning goals in at least three of the four areas above: being, knowing, doing, and leading. A learning goal expresses how you sense God calling you to change and grow - with regard to knowledge, skills, behavior, values, attitudes. Your learning goals will be stated in such a way that you will be able to know when you have accomplished that goal.

You'll learn how to make SMART goals and begin writing goals in the areas of being, knowing, doing and leading that will contribute to achieving your Personal Purpose.

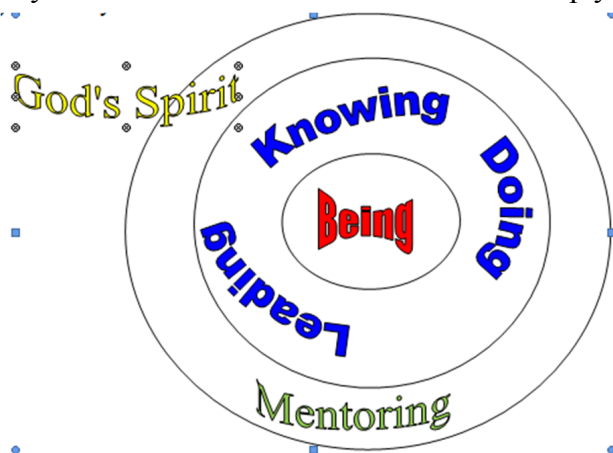
Step 4 - How am I going to learn and grow? (courses, workshops, seminars, other resources that will help me reach my destination or goal)

In this step you will develop concrete action plans for achieving the goals you outline in Step Three. These actions include approaches or courses or programs of study, along with resources, that are appropriate and accessible to you in terms of outcomes, level of study, cost, and time requirements. Tonight you will begin sketching in some tentative "how" steps. Your mentor will help you develop this step still further. So don't be frustrated if you don't complete this step tonight.

Step 5 - When am I going to accomplish this goal? (time frame)

A plan without a beginning and an end will always remain just a plan. As you continue to shape the plans you begin making in Discovery, you will become more definite about the time frame in which you plan to accomplish your growth or learning goals. Getting clear on the "when" is the final step in shaping your Growth Plan.

Of course, the final step is carrying out the plan. Plan your growth. Then grow with your plan. Remember, you're not on your own. You will grow with God's help and with the support and encouragement of your mentor. Ask God and a mentor to help you identify a time frame.



Commit to the LORD whatever you do, and your plans will succeed. (Prov. 16:3)

Ask the Lord to bless your plans, and you will be successful in carrying them out. (Prov. 16:3 TEV)

Table group discussion

What seems helpful about developing a Growth Plan for myself?

What seems difficult or confusing?

Homework for Session Six

1. Repeat the “Petition/Intercession” exercise each day (15 minutes).
2. During the week, read and review session 6.
3. [Optional] Read the following pages of *Celebration of Discipline* by Richard Foster, below.
4. Follow up on inviting a mentor. Invite your mentor to Session 8.
5. Make sure you have a Bible with you for use in the next session.

1. The Spiritual Disciplines: Door to Liberation

I go through life as a transient on his way to eternity, made in the image of God but with that image debased, needing to be taught how to meditate, to worship, to think.

—DONALD COGGAN

Superficiality is the curse of our age. The doctrine of instant satisfaction is a primary spiritual problem. The desperate need today is not for a greater number of intelligent people, or gifted people, but for deep people.

The classical Disciplines* of the spiritual life call us to move beyond surface living into the depths. They invite us to explore the inner caverns of the spiritual realm. They urge us to be the answer to a hollow world. John Woolman counsels, "It is good for thee to dwell deep, that thou mayest feel and understand the spirits of people."¹

We must not be led to believe that the Disciplines are only for spiritual giants and hence beyond our reach, or only for contemplatives who devote all their time to prayer and meditation. Far from it. God intends the Disciplines of the spiritual life to be for ordinary human beings: people who have jobs, who care for children, who wash dishes and mow lawns. In fact, the Disciplines are best exercised in the midst of our relationships with our husband or wife, our brothers and sisters, our friends and neighbors.

*You may be wondering why the Disciplines described in this book are termed "classical." They are not classical merely because they are ancient, although they have been practiced by sincere people over the centuries. The Disciplines are classical because they are *central* to experiential Christianity. In one form or another all of the devotional masters have affirmed the necessity of the Disciplines.

Chapter 1, Celebration of Disciplines, Richard Foster
Reprinted by permission of HarperCollins Publishers,
Inc.

Neither should we think of the Spiritual Disciplines as some dull drudgery aimed at exterminating laughter from the face of the earth. Joy is the keynote of all the Disciplines. The purpose of the Disciplines is liberation from the stifling slavery to self-interest and fear. When the inner spirit is liberated from all that weighs it down, it can hardly be described as dull drudgery. Singing, dancing, even shouting characterize the Disciplines of the spiritual life.

In one important sense, the Spiritual Disciplines are not hard.* We need not be well advanced in matters of theology to practice the Disciplines. Recent converts—for that matter people who have yet to turn their lives over to Jesus Christ—can and should practice them. The primary requirement is a longing after God. "As a hart longs for flowing streams, so longs my soul for thee, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the Living God," writes the psalmist (Ps. 42:1, 2).

Beginners are welcome. I, too, am a beginner, even and especially after a number of years of practicing every Discipline discussed in this book. As Thomas Merton says, "We do not want to be beginners. But let us be convinced of the fact that we will never be anything else but beginners, all our life!"²

Psalms 42:7 reads "Deep calls to deep." Perhaps somewhere in the subterranean chambers of your life you have heard the call to deeper, fuller living. You have become weary of frothy experiences and shallow teaching. Every now and then you have caught glimpses, hints of something more than you have known. Inwardly you long to launch out into the deep.

Those who have heard the distant call deep within and who desire to explore the world of the Spiritual Disciplines are immediately faced with two difficulties. The first is philosophical. The materialistic base of our age has become so pervasive that it has given people grave doubts about their ability to reach beyond the physical world. Many first-rate scientists have passed beyond such doubts, knowing that we cannot be con-

*In another sense, they are hard indeed—that is a theme we will develop later.

fined to a space-time box. But the average person is influenced by popular science, which is a generation behind the times and is prejudiced against the nonmaterial world.

It is hard to overstate how saturated we are with the mentality of popular science. Meditation, for example, if allowed at all, is not thought of as an encounter between a person and God, but as psychological manipulation. Usually people will tolerate a brief dabbling in the "inward journey," but then it is time to get on with *real* business in the *real* world. We need the courage to move beyond the prejudice of our age and affirm with our best scientists that more than the material world exists. In intellectual honesty, we should be willing to study and explore the spiritual life with all the rigor and determination we would give to any field of research.

The second difficulty is a practical one. We simply do not know how to go about exploring the inward life. This has not always been true. In the first century and earlier, it was not necessary to give instruction on how to "do" the Disciplines of the spiritual life. The Bible called people to such Disciplines as fasting, prayer, worship, and celebration but gave almost no instruction about how to do them. The reason for this is easy to see. Those Disciplines were so frequently practiced and such a part of the general culture that the "how to" was common knowledge. Fasting, for example, was so common that no one had to ask what to eat before a fast, or how to break a fast, or how to avoid dizziness while fasting—everyone already knew.

This is not true of our generation. Today there is an abysmal ignorance of the most simple and practical aspects of nearly all the classic Spiritual Disciplines. Hence, any book written on the subject must provide practical instruction on precisely how we do the Disciplines. One word of caution, however, must be given at the outset: to know the mechanics does not mean that we are practicing the Disciplines. The Spiritual Disciplines are an inward and spiritual reality, and the inner attitude of the heart is far more crucial than the mechanics for coming into the reality of the spiritual life.

In our enthusiasm to practice the Disciplines, we may fail to practice discipline. The life that is pleasing to God is not a series of religious duties. We have only one thing to do, namely, to experience a life of relationship and intimacy with God, "the Father of lights with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change" (James 1:17).

The Slavery of Ingrained Habits

We are accustomed to thinking of sin as individual acts of disobedience to God. This is true enough as far as it goes, but Scripture goes much further.* In Romans the apostle Paul frequently refers to sin as a condition that plagues the human race (i.e., Rom. 3:9-18). Sin as a condition works its way out through the "bodily members," that is, the ingrained habits of the body (Rom. 7:5ff.). And there is no slavery that can compare to the slavery of ingrained habits of sin.

Isaiah 57:20 says, "The wicked are like the tossing sea; for it cannot rest, and its waters toss up mire and dirt." The sea does not need to do anything special to produce mire and dirt; that is the result of its natural motions. This is also true of us when we are under the condition of sin. The natural motions of our lives produce mire and dirt. Sin is part of the internal structure of our lives. No special effort is needed to produce it. No wonder we feel trapped.

Our ordinary method of dealing with ingrained sin is to launch a frontal attack. We rely on our willpower and determination. Whatever may be the issue for us—anger, fear, bitterness, gluttony, pride, lust, substance abuse—we determine never to do it again; we pray against it, fight against it, set our will against it. But the struggle is all in vain, and we find ourselves once again morally bankrupt or, worse yet, so proud of our external righteousness that "whitened sepulchers" is a mild

*Sin is such a complex matter that the Hebrew language has eight different words for it, and all eight are found in the Bible.

description of our condition. In his excellent little book entitled *Freedom from Sinful Thoughts* Heini Arnold writes, "We . . . want to make it quite clear that we cannot free and purify our own heart by exerting our own 'will.'"³

In Colossians Paul lists some of the outward forms that people use to control sin: "touch not, taste not, handle not." He then adds that these things "have indeed a show of wisdom in *will worship*" (Col. 2:20-23, KJV, [italics added]). "Will worship"—what a telling phrase, and how descriptive of so much of our lives! The moment we feel we can succeed and attain victory over sin by the strength of our will alone is the moment we are worshipping the will. Isn't it ironic that Paul looks at our most strenuous efforts in the spiritual walk and calls them idolatry, "will worship"?

Willpower will never succeed in dealing with the deeply ingrained habits of sin. Emmet Fox writes, "As soon as you resist mentally any undesirable or unwanted circumstance, you thereby endow it with more power—power which it will use against you, and you will have depleted your own resources to that exact extent."⁴ Heini Arnold concludes, "As long as we think we can save ourselves by our own will power, we will only make the evil in us stronger than ever."⁵ This same truth has been experienced by all the great writers of the devotional life from St. Augustine to St. Francis, from John Calvin to John Wesley, from Teresa of Ávila to Juliana of Norwich.

"Will worship" may produce an outward show of success for a time, but in the cracks and crevices of our lives our deep inner condition will eventually be revealed. Jesus describes this condition when he speaks of the external righteousness of the Pharisees. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. . . . I tell you, on the day of judgment men will render account for every *careless word* they utter" (Matt. 12:34-36, [italics added]). You see, by dint of will people can make a good showing for a time, but sooner or later there will come that unguarded moment when the "careless word" will slip out to reveal the true condition of the heart. If we are full of com-

passion, it will be revealed; if we are full of bitterness, that also will be revealed.

It is not that we plan to be this way. We have no intention of exploding with anger or of parading a sticky arrogance, but when we are with people, what we *are* comes out. Though we may try with all our might to hide these things, we are betrayed by our eyes, our tongue, our chin, our hands, our whole body language. Willpower has no defense against the careless word, the unguarded moment. The will has the same deficiency as the law—it can deal only with externals. It is incapable of bringing about the necessary transformation of the inner spirit.

The Spiritual Disciplines Open the Door

When we despair of gaining inner transformation through human powers of will and determination, we are open to a wonderful new realization: inner righteousness is a gift from God to be graciously received. The needed change within us is God's work, not ours. The demand is for an inside job, and only God can work from the inside. We cannot attain or earn this righteousness of the kingdom of God; it is a grace that is given.

In the book of Romans the apostle Paul goes to great lengths to show that righteousness is a gift of God.* He uses the term thirty-five times in this epistle and each time insists that righteousness is unattained and unattainable through human effort. One of the clearest statements is Romans 5:17, "... those who receive the abundance of grace and the *free gift of righteousness* [shall] reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ [italics added]." This teaching, of course, is found not only in Romans

*This includes both objective righteousness and subjective righteousness. In this book we are dealing with the issue of subjective righteousness (or sanctification if you prefer another theological term), but it is important to understand that both are gracious gifts from God. And, in fact, the Bible does not make the clear division between objective and subjective righteousness that theologians are accustomed to draw, simply because the biblical writers would find it ludicrous to talk of having one without the other.

but throughout Scripture and stands as one of the cornerstones of the Christian faith.

The moment we grasp this breathtaking insight we are in danger of an error in the opposite direction. We are tempted to believe there is nothing we can do. If all human strivings end in moral bankruptcy (and having tried it, we know it is so), and if righteousness is a gracious gift from God (as the Bible clearly states), then is it not logical to conclude that we must wait for God to come and transform us? Strangely enough, the answer is no. The analysis is correct—human striving is insufficient and righteousness is a gift from God—but the conclusion is faulty. Happily there is something we can do. We do not need to be hung on the horns of the dilemma of either human works or idleness. God has given us the Disciplines of the spiritual life as a means of receiving his grace. The Disciplines allow us to place ourselves before God so that he can transform us.

The apostle Paul says, "he who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption; but he who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life" (Gal. 6:8). Paul's analogy is instructive. A farmer is helpless to grow grain; all he can do is provide the right conditions for the growing of grain. He cultivates the ground, he plants the seed, he waters the plants, and then the natural forces of the earth take over and up comes the grain. This is the way it is with the Spiritual Disciplines—they are a way of sowing to the Spirit. The Disciplines are God's way of getting us into the ground; they put us where he can work within us and transform us. By themselves the Spiritual Disciplines can do nothing; they can only get us to the place where something can be done. They are God's means of grace. The inner righteousness we seek is not something that is poured on our heads. God has ordained the Disciplines of the spiritual life as the means by which we place ourselves where he can bless us.

In this regard it would be proper to speak of "the path of disciplined grace." It is "grace" because it is free; it is "disci-

plined" because there is something for us to do. In *The Cost of Discipleship* Dietrich Bonhoeffer makes it clear that grace is free, but it is not cheap. The grace of God is unearned and unearnable, but if we ever expect to grow in grace, we must pay the price of a consciously chosen course of action which involves both individual and group life. Spiritual growth is the purpose of the Disciplines.

It might be helpful to visualize what we have been discussing. Picture a long, narrow ridge with a sheer drop-off on either side. The chasm to the right is the way of moral bankruptcy through human strivings for righteousness. Historically this has been called the heresy of moralism. The chasm to the left is moral bankruptcy through the absence of human strivings. This has been called the heresy of antinomianism. On the ridge there is a path, the Disciplines of the spiritual life. This path leads to the inner transformation and healing for which we seek. We must never veer off to the right or the left, but stay on the path. The path is fraught with severe difficulties, but also with incredible joys. As we travel on this path, the blessing of God will come upon us and reconstruct us into the image of Jesus Christ. We must always remember that the path does not produce the change; it only places us where the change can occur. This is the path of disciplined grace.

There is a saying in moral theology that "virtue is easy." But the maxim is true only to the extent that God's gracious work has taken over our inner spirit and transformed the ingrained habit patterns of our lives. Until that is accomplished, virtue is hard, very hard indeed. We struggle to exhibit a loving and compassionate spirit, yet it is as if we are bringing something in from the outside. Then bubbling up from the inner depths is the one thing we did not want, a biting and bitter spirit. However, once we live and walk on the path of disciplined grace for a season, we will discover internal changes.

We do no more than receive a gift, yet we know the changes are real. We know they are real because we discover that the spirit of compassion we once found so hard to exhibit is now

easy. In fact, to be full of bitterness would be the hard thing. Divine Love has slipped into our inner spirit and taken over our habit patterns. In the unguarded moments there is a spontaneous flow from the inner sanctuary of our lives of "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control" (Gal. 5:22, 23). There is no longer the tiring need to hide our inner selves from others. We do not have to work hard at being good and kind; we *are* good and kind. To refrain from being good and kind would be the hard work because goodness and kindness are part of our nature. Just as the natural motions of our lives once produced mire and dirt, now they produce "righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit" (Rom. 14:17). Shakespeare observes that "The quality of mercy is not strained"—nor are any of the virtues once they have taken over the personality.

The Way of Death: Turning the Disciplines into Laws

The Spiritual Disciplines are intended for our good. They are meant to bring the abundance of God into our lives. It is possible, however, to turn them into another set of soul-killing laws. Law-bound Disciplines breathe death.

Jesus teaches that we must go beyond the righteousness of the scribes and the Pharisees (Matt. 5:20). Yet we need to see that their righteousness was no small thing. They were committed to following God in a way that many of us are not prepared to do. One factor, however, was always central to their righteousness: *externalism*. Their righteousness consisted in control over externals, often including the manipulation of others. The extent to which we have gone beyond the righteousness of the scribes and the Pharisees is seen in how much our lives demonstrate the internal work of God upon the heart. To be sure, this will have external results, but the work will be internal. It is easy in our zeal for the Spiritual Disciplines to turn them into the external righteousness of the scribes and the Pharisees.

When the Disciplines degenerate into law, they are used to manipulate and control people. We take explicit commands and use them to imprison others. Such a deterioration of the Spiritual Disciplines results in pride and fear. Pride takes over because we come to believe that we are the right kind of people. Fear takes over because we dread losing control.

If we are to progress in the spiritual walk so that the Disciplines are a blessing and not a curse, we must come to the place in our lives where we can lay down the everlasting burden of always needing to manage others. This drive, more than any single thing, will lead us to turn the Spiritual Disciplines into laws. Once we have made a law, we have an "externalism" by which we judge who is measuring up and who is not. Without laws the Disciplines are primarily an internal work, and it is impossible to control an internal work. When we genuinely believe that inner transformation is God's work and not ours, we can put to rest our passion to set others straight.

We must beware of how quickly we can latch onto this word or that word and turn it into a law. The moment we do so we qualify for Jesus' stern pronouncement against the Pharisees: "They bind heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with their finger" (Matt. 23:4). In these matters we need the words of the apostle Paul embedded in our minds: "We deal not in the letter but in the Spirit. The letter of the Law leads to the death of the soul; the Spirit of God alone can give life to the soul" (2 Cor. 3:6, Phillips).

As we enter the inner world of the Spiritual Disciplines, there will always be the danger of turning them into laws. But we are not left to our own human devices. Jesus Christ has promised to be our ever-present Teacher and Guide. His voice is not hard to hear. His direction is not hard to understand. If we are beginning to calcify what should always remain alive and growing, he will tell us. We can trust his teaching. If we are wandering off toward some wrong idea or unprofitable practice, he

will guide us back. If we are willing to listen to the Heavenly Monitor, we will receive the instruction we need.

Our world is hungry for genuinely changed people. Leo Tolstoy observes, "Everybody thinks of changing humanity and nobody thinks of changing himself."⁶ Let us be among those who believe that the inner transformation of our lives is a goal worthy of our best effort.

7 *Developing a Growth Plan*

*We may make our plans,
but God has the last word.
(Proverbs 16:1 TEV)*

*Commit to the Lord whatever you do,
and your plans will succeed. (Proverbs 16:3)*

*You may make your plans,
but God directs your actions.
(Proverbs 16:9 TEV)*

*Remain in me, and I will remain in you.
No branch can bear fruit by itself;
it must remain in the vine.
Neither can you bear fruit
unless you remain in me.
(John 15:4)*

Objectives for Discovery Seven

1. Understand the importance of planning and the value of a Growth Plan.
2. Prepare to develop a plan for practicing spiritual disciplines.
3. Identify SMART goals.
4. Begin to work on a Personal Growth Plan.

Schedule:

Table Group Discussion of Spiritual Disciplines Practiced

Pick one discussion question to answer in your table group. Each person has four minutes. Whole group discussion: comment on what you heard or said.

1. Of the spiritual disciplines we've practiced in Discovery, which one did you find the most meaningful? Why did you find it the most meaningful?
2. What types of prayer or scripture meditation did you find to be particularly meaningful in your spiritual life before coming to Discovery? Why did you find them meaningful?
3. What are some of the new insights that you have received as a result of practicing the spiritual disciplines in Discovery over the past several weeks? These insights may be about the practice of spiritual disciplines or they may be new insights from the scriptures we used.

Spiritual Discipline: Developing a Plan for Practicing Spiritual Disciplines

Smart Goals and Growth Plan

Developing Daily Devotions (a Spiritual Practice or a Rule of Life)

On the spiritual journey it can be useful to adopt a “rule of life” for a period of time. Such an approach is a broader, more organized approach to the typical daily devotions. By “rule” we mean a practice or set of practices to which we devote ourselves for a time to allow the disciplines to become integrated into our habits and to allow the Holy Spirit to form us spiritually.

To pursue a “rule” in life speaks of discipline. This stands in contrast to seeking novelty through a smorgasbord of exercises or the approach of a consumer who seeks to experience everything in order to enhance his or her own ego. Fidelity to God is to shun the “fast-food” attitude. Instead, with humility, patience, and continuity we present ourselves to God through a rule of life over a period of time for the formation of the soul.

To embrace such a “rule” may involve not only specific disciplines but also the choice of particular “engagement patterns” or basic resources for engagement with God. For example in selecting an “engagement pattern” one might choose from among various elements such as scripture, prayer, reflection, worship, accountability, service, or mission to create an overarching pattern for engagement with God in spiritual disciplines.

In Discovery, we suggest that in the Growth Plan section on “being,” you include scripture, prayer, reflection, accountability, and mission (or response) as your engagement pattern for a year. This engagement pattern provides the framework within which you select particular disciplines for daily devotions.

[Optional] To help you gain some context on this discipline of creating a “rule of life,” read the article, “Putting It All Together: Developing a Rule of Life,” by Marjorie Thompson from *Soul Feast* below.

9 Putting It All Together *Developing a Rule of Life*

As our lives and faith progress, the heart expands and with the sweetness of love we move down the paths of God's commandments. Never departing from His guidance . . . we patiently share in Christ's passion, so we may eventually enter into the Kingdom of God.

The Rule of Saint Benedict

Certain kinds of plants need support in order to grow properly. Tomatoes need stakes, and beans must attach themselves to suspended strings. Creeping vines like clematis and wisteria will grow on any structure they can find. Rambling roses take kindly to garden walls, archways, and trellises. Without support, these plants would collapse in a heap on the ground. Their blossoms would not have the space and sun they need to flourish, and their fruits would rot in contact with the soil. We would be unable to enjoy their beauty and sustenance.

When it comes to spiritual growth, human beings are much like these plants. We need structure and support. Otherwise our spirituality grows only in a confused and disorderly way. The fruit of the Spirit in us gets tangled and is susceptible to corruption, and the beauty of our lives is diminished. We need structure in order to have enough space, air, and light to flourish. Structure gives us the freedom to grow as we are meant to.

There is a name in Christian tradition for the kind of structure that supports our spiritual growth. It is called a *rule of life*. Without a rule of life, very little of what you have been reading and exploring in this book will prove to be of lasting value to you. This final chapter is an opportunity for you to begin putting together what you have learned. It is time to make some choices concerning the spiritual practices you feel called to engage in.

Thompson, Marjorie J. *Soul Feast: An Invitation to the Christian Spiritual Life*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1995.

What Is a Rule of Life?

A rule of life is a pattern of spiritual disciplines that provides structure and direction for growth in holiness. When we speak of *patterns* in our life, we mean attitudes, behaviors, or elements that are routine, repeated, regular. Indeed, the Latin term for "rule" is *regula*, from which our words *regular* and *regulate* derive. A rule of life is not meant to be restrictive, although it certainly asks for genuine commitment. It is meant to help us establish a rhythm of daily living, a basic order within which new freedoms can grow. A rule of life, like a trellis, curbs our tendency to wander and supports our frail efforts to grow spiritually.

Throughout Christian history, those who have been serious about maturing in the spiritual life have embraced discipline. Remember that discipline means training and practice. Author William Paulsell notes that while we tend to resist the whole idea of discipline, we have to admit that it allows us to make the most of our God-given gifts:

Athletes, musicians, writers, scientists, and others progress in their fields because they are well-disciplined people. Unfortunately, there is a tendency to think that in matters of faith we should pray, meditate, and engage in other spiritual disciplines only when we feel like it.¹

Finally, the purpose of a rule is to help us grow into holiness. God calls us to be holy as God is holy, to grow into greater intimacy with the One we are created to resemble: "Beloved, we are God's children now; what we will be has not yet been revealed. What we do know is this: when he is revealed, we will be like him, for we will see him as he is" (1 John 3:2). A rule of life allows us to cultivate and deepen this growing likeness. It fosters gifts of the Spirit in personal life and human community, helping to form us into the persons God intends us to be.

Yet this gradual transformation into the full image and likeness of God does not happen automatically. It is not a process of natural growth, like that of a sapling into a fully mature tree. It is a process that requires the death of much that seems natural to us, in order to allow a deeper mystery of our life in God to rise up. Maturation in faith is like the metamorphosis of a caterpillar into a moth. The caterpillar must yield up the life it knows and

It is unlikely that we will deepen our relationship with God in a casual or haphazard manner. There will be a need for some intentional commitment and some reorganization in our own lives. But there is nothing that will enrich our lives more than a deeper and clearer perception of God's presence in the routine of daily living.

William O. Paulsell

submit to the mystery of interior transformation. It emerges from this process transfigured, with wings that give it freedom to fly. It is naturally attracted to light, although still vulnerable to ruin if deceived by artificial light. A rule of life gives us a way to enter the lifelong process of personal transformation. Its disciplines help us to shed the familiar but constricting "old self" and allow our "new self" in Christ to be formed—the true self that is naturally attracted to the light of God.

There are both corporate and personal rules of life in Christian tradition. Perhaps the best known of all corporate rules is that of Saint Benedict, attractive and practical because of its moderate tone and commonsense wisdom. The Rule of Saint Benedict describes both attitudes and specific practices to guide monks in their common life. Personal rules are formulated by individuals to help them receive and express more fully the gifts of the Spirit. They are very diverse, reflecting the needs and spiritual aspirations of those who devise them. Some focus more on developing inner attitudes, values, and habits such as humility, charity, faith, and gentleness. Others emphasize specific practices such as prayer, fasting, and self-examination. These, of course, are meant to lead us toward the inner attitudes mentioned, as well as to their outward expression in human community.

Examples of Personal Rules

When Pope John XXIII was a seminary student, he included the following elements in his rule:

Fifteen minutes of silent prayer upon rising in the morning

Fifteen minutes of spiritual reading

Before bed, a general examination of conscience followed by confession; then identifying issues for the next morning's prayer

Arranging the hours of the day to make this rule possible: setting aside specific time for prayer, study, recreation, and sleep

Making a habit of turning the mind to God in prayer

A very different style of rule was developed by Catherine de Hueck Doherty, the Russian baroness who founded Madonna

We are about to open a school for God's service, in which we hope nothing harsh or oppressive will be directed. For preserving charity or correcting faults, it may be necessary at times, by reason of justice, to be slightly more severe. Do not fear this and retreat, for the path to salvation is long and the entrance is narrow.

The Rule of St. Benedict

House in Ontario, Canada. Drawing on the Russian hermit tradition, she recommends a monthly retreat into silence and solitude for a twenty-four-hour period. A hermitage (*poustinia* in Russian) is a simple cottage isolated from human traffic that allows for fasting, prayer, and immersion in scripture.

Dorothy Day, who began a ministry called "houses of hospitality" for the poor in New York, had another kind of personal rule. She received the Eucharist daily, read the Bible daily, and kept a journal that was, for her, a form of prayer. She saw Christ in the faces of the poor.

Martin Luther King Jr. developed a rule to guide the non-violent protests of the civil rights movement. His rule emphasized the spiritual principles and inner attitudes undergirding one's actions, although it also included specific practices like meditation, prayer, and service. Every demonstrator had to agree to this rule:

Meditate daily on the teachings and life of Jesus.

Remember always that the nonviolent movement in Birmingham seeks justice and reconciliation, not victory.

Walk and talk in the manner of love, for God is love.

Pray daily to be used by God in order that all might be free.

Sacrifice personal wishes in order that all might be free.

Observe with both friend and foe the ordinary rules of courtesy.

Seek to perform regular service for others and the world.

Refrain from violence of fist, tongue, or heart.

Strive to be in good spiritual and bodily health.

Follow the directions of the movement and the captains of a demonstration.³

It should be clear from these few examples that there can be great latitude in a personal rule of life. Your rule will be unique to your personality, circumstances, and needs, yet in harmony with the basic historic practices of Christian life and faith through the centuries. Developing a personal rule is a matter of discernment.

Making Choices

If you are like me, you will by this time either be very excited by all these possibilities for spiritual growth or you will feel overwhelmed. I am typically tempted to think that I must do everything, all at once! But this is humanly impossible, unless you are a monk or solitary who has intentionally devoted your entire life to the practice of spiritual disciplines. As people who live in a world of families and work commitments, we must choose what seems most central and what is genuinely feasible for us. How do we go about making such choices, especially if they all seem good?

The first thing to do is pay close attention to what you feel most attracted to. Go back over the chapter headings in this book. Look at the "Invitations to Explore" sections in chapters 2, 3, 5, and 6 and the practical suggestions in each chapter. Are there certain suggestions you feel especially drawn to? Is there anything that seems to "have your name on it"? Write down what comes to mind.

Next, ask yourself why you are attracted to a given discipline. Does it seem suited to your personality? Does it represent an area of growth you feel in need of at this point in your life? Does it promise a measure of balance in your life you do not currently enjoy? Are you simply attracted inwardly for reasons that are not apparent at the moment?

We are often attracted to spiritual practices that seem natural to our personality. For example, a more introverted person might be drawn to the more inward disciplines of contemplative prayer and self-examination. An extrovert might be attracted to communal expressions of worship and hospitality that suit a more interactive nature. There is nothing wrong with choosing spiritual practices because they feel congruent with who you are. They are likely to be the disciplines you engage in with the greatest consistency and satisfaction. They may not, however, be the practices that will stretch you toward the greatest growth or the ones you most need. Still, they are probably a good place to get started, especially if you have little spiritual discipline in your life at the moment.

Perhaps you are drawn to a practice because it promises to bring greater balance to your life. You need to be whole to be healthy. The Christian spiritual life expresses our entire being,

for the Spirit is concerned with every dimension of human life, individually and in community. Perhaps precisely because you are an introvert, God is calling you to open yourself to a community spiritual practice. You need to develop the relational side of your spirituality because it is too easy for you to sink comfortably into inward and private reflection. Or precisely because you are an extrovert, God is inviting you to look inward, and you should pay attention to the motives and needs behind your desire to constantly interact with others.

Look closely at the practices described in this book that do *not* appeal to you, or may even repulse you. Bring the matter into your prayer. Why do you feel such resistance to this particular discipline? Does God have anything to say to you about it? A strong negative reaction to a practice such as fasting or self-examination may reveal that you are resisting paying attention to a part of your life in need of healing. Ask God to show you what spiritual disciplines you need in your life right now. You may be surprised by the response!

The Rule of Saint Benedict views balance in human life very seriously. Times of common and private prayer are balanced. The daily rhythm of monastic life provides a balance of exercise for spirit, mind, and body; prayer, study, and manual labor. We need to consider such balance as we choose disciplines to structure into our daily lives. Each of us needs a balance between personal and corporate disciplines; each of us need practices that help us look to our own hearts, and practices that help us forget ourselves in meeting the needs of others. When the Spirit is freed to do its work, these disciplines work together in a mutually sustaining way.

To summarize, there are three basic questions to reflect on in choosing disciplines for your rule of life:

What am I deeply attracted to, and why?

Where do I feel God is calling me to stretch and grow?

What kind of balance do I need in my life?

When, after thinking about these questions, you are clear about your priorities, you need to ask what is realistic for you to commit to. This is a matter of honoring personal limitations. Far better to commit to a single practice and stick with it than to take on five and quit altogether because you cannot keep up. The spiritual life is not a heroic achievement. It is a matter of gradual

growth in faithfulness. Realistic commitment is an expression of humility.

Take account of your personal character. Some of us respond well to clear structure, while others of us flourish best with more flexibility. Some of us wake up filled with energy at five in the morning; some of us are wide-eyed and alert at midnight; some of us find our peak energies somewhere in the middle of the day. God deserves our best energy, not the dregs. Choose times for spiritual reading and prayer with this in mind.

Take account of your personal circumstances at this point in your life. If you are a parent saying at home with preschool children or an adult child now tending aging parents, an hour of concentrated spiritual practice daily is probably unrealistic. You may want to try short periods of reflection on a scripture verse throughout the day, or a breath prayer carried into your routines. You might find it helpful to practice a simple self-examination before bedtime, observing where you have felt God's presence in your family life and how you have responded to this grace.

If you have a demanding job with long hours of work, it may make sense to consider what forms of hospitality you can offer to God and to others in that setting. Prayers of the heart are a good way to remember the divine presence through your day. You may need to schedule a personal retreat several times a year for more in-depth opportunities in prayer and meditation.

If you are retired, perhaps you have more freedom to choose how much time you devote to spiritual practices. Thirty to sixty minutes of spiritual reading and prayer might be quite feasible. If your health is good, you could practice a weekly fast. Opportunities to offer hospitality may abound.

A chronic illness or disability can be either an opportunity or an impediment to prayer, depending on its nature and degree. If you are very sick, your capacity for concentration will be diminished. It is best to stick with short, simple phrases of prayer, and perhaps invite others to read short portions of scripture to you. If you are not too sick, your limited mobility gives you a real opportunity to spend time in spiritual reading, prayer, and self-examination. You can exercise a genuine ministry of intercession, and offer hospitality of heart in many ways, including writing letters to those who would appreciate a word of encouragement or friendship.

Whatever your circumstances, it is always possible to include some form of spiritual discipline in your daily priorities. If you want to become and remain physically healthy, you eat sensibly and exercise regularly. If you want to become spiritually healthy and remain replenished, you practice spiritual disciplines regularly. It is that simple.

Keeping Ourselves Accountable

Once you have decided on a rule of life you can realistically give yourself to, write it down. Commit yourself in print. Remember, this is not a once-for-all-time decision, but a rule of life that is practical for this time in your life. Put a copy of your rule in a place where you can review it frequently, perhaps near your place of prayer.

Choose one person you love and trust to share your rule with. Ask that person to pray for you, and to help hold you accountable to faithfulness in your practice. If you have a spiritual friend, or decide that you will seek a spiritual director, this is the natural person to share your rule with. But a prayer partner or other friend in faith could also serve in this role. A small group seeking spiritual growth together can be an excellent help in this regard. Spouses and other family members should know enough of your rule to be able to encourage, or at least not interfere needlessly with, your practice. The better part of wisdom suggests that you *not* expect your spouse to be the primary person holding you accountable in your spiritual life.

It is very important to seek support from your faith community when you decide to become serious about developing your spirituality. The Christian life is dangerous terrain to travel alone. We get easily discouraged when our disciplines become boring or difficult. We become distraught when they do not produce the results we expected. We are subject to confusion in our practices in part because we are just learning them, and in part because of our own distorted perceptions and personal limitations. Any spiritual discipline can be manipulated for our own ends rather than offered as a means of God's transforming grace in us.

We need the wider community of faith to help us stay on track. That community comes to us through corporate worship,

Developing a Rule of Life

study, and service, and through the grace of individuals whose experience and wisdom can guide our own. We will find only loneliness and illusion if we insist on forging the path alone. The Body of Christ is given to us for mutual encouragement, support, clarity, guidance, and love. To receive that gift in all humility is an experience of grace.

I hope it is very clear by now that the spiritual life in Christian practice is a joint intention. It joins the personal and the corporate: our individual disciplines need to be practiced in the context of a community of believers if they are to glorify Christ. It joins the inner and the outer: the disciplines that search and speak to our own hearts must be balanced by disciplines that engage us in self-forgetful service to others if they are to bear fruit in God's kingdom.

Finally, the Christian spiritual life joins the divine intent for us with our own intent to love and serve God more completely. Our desire to know the Lover of Souls more intimately is far outweighed by a divine passion to draw us into the eternal, tender embrace of holy love that is our created destiny. Because our God is patient and faithful, we can offer our stumbling, inconsistent efforts at a rule of life and know they will be accepted. As long as our desire is true and we are willing to persist despite many stalls, detours, and breakdowns, God's grace will strengthen us to persevere. The goal is infinitely worth all the effort, confusion, and pain along the path:

For this slight momentary affliction is preparing us for an eternal weight of glory beyond all measure, because we look not at what can be seen but at what cannot be seen; for what can be seen is temporary, but what cannot be seen is eternal.

2 Cor. 4:17-18

It is my prayer that you will have found something in these pages to encourage and guide your spiritual quest. The practices described are means of grace, paths to the food and drink we crave in our inmost being. God can use them to nourish us. Together they offer a true soul feast. Since you cannot indulge in a feast all at once, but only in courses and over time, I trust you will choose and savor each food for the unique nourishment and delight it can give. Resist the temptation to be greedy at this table.

O, Begin! Fix some part of every day for private exercises. . . . Whether you like it or no, read and pray daily. It is for your life; there is no other way: else you will be a trifler all your days. . . . Do justice to your own soul; give it time and means to grow. Do not starve yourself any longer.

John Wesley

Its bounty will not be depleted by many hungry seekers. Indeed, the more the children at this table, the greater the abundance of supply. God's economy is not based on scarcity. The richest sources of spiritual nurture are permanently set upon the table of our lives. While it would be folly to ignore or refuse them, there is no need to rush or grab. Take and receive as you have need. Enjoy each to the full.

Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good!

Happy are those who take refuge in God! (Ps. 34:8)¹

Notes

1. William O. Paulsell, "Ways of Prayer: Designing a Personal Rule," *Weavings* 2, no. 5 (November-December 1987): 40.
2. See Paulsell, "Ways of Prayer," 43. In his book *Rules for Prayer* (Mahwah, N.J.: Paulist Press, 1993), Paulsell indicates that these "Ten Commandments" are found in Martin Luther King, Jr.'s book *Why We Can't Wait* (New York: Signet Books, 1964).
3. *Prayers for Praise and Worship: A Complete Liturgical Psalter*, eds. John C. Holbert, S.T. Kimbrough, Jr., and Carlton R. Young (Nashville: Abingdon, 1992), 57.

Elements of a Rule of Life **Specific Spiritual Disciplines**

Scripture

- Reading through the Bible
- Meditation on scripture
 - Divine Reading (Lectio Divina - Richard Foster, *Prayer*, 149-50)
 - Reading the same passage aloud for several days
 - Writing your own Psalm based on a particular Psalm
- Memorizing selected passages of scriptures
- Praying the scriptures (consecration, thanksgiving, praise, lament, etc.)
- Living in the biblical story (Bohler, *Opening to God*)
- Study of Scripture (What does it say? Mean? Mean to me?)

Prayer

- Prayer of Worship
- Prayer of Consecration
- Written Prayer
- Prayer of Faith
- Dwelling in the Word, Praying the Scriptures
- Petitionary and Intercessory Prayer (Foster, Ch 16, 17)
- Prayer and fasting; prayers of confession
- Use of the arts in prayer
- Prayer rituals in daily life
- Sitting in silence and solitude with God (waiting)

Reflection

- Journaling (Kelsey, *Adventure Inward*)
- Storyteller Imagination
- Silence/solitude
- Personal reflection, Reflective walking
- “Doing nothing” or hanging out with God
- Communing with God in nature

Accountability

- Small group sharing
 - Spiritual friendship
 - Group spiritual guidance
 - Spiritual direction
 - Mentor-Mentoree relationship
- Three accountability questions:**
1. How have I experienced God’s grace in the past week/month?
 2. Where have I resisted/failed to experience God’s grace?
 3. For what do I want to be held accountable for in the next week/month?

Mission

- Several response questions related to our encounter with God**
1. As I commune with God, what is God asking of me ...
 - in relationship to my own inner life?
 - in relationship to those close to me (family, church, work)?
 - in relationship to the world in which I live?
 2. As I listen to the “heartbeat” of God, and to the heart cry of the world, what is God wanting to do and how am I being asked to join in with the interests, concerns, and mission of God? What am I passionate about? How does God’s mission become my mission?

EXERCISE: DEVELOPING A SPIRITUAL PRACTICE

Spiritual Exercise: Instructions for practice in class and at home.

In Class:

- a. Do a brief reflective reading as a group of John 15:1-8 (*see below*).
- b. Reflect on the place of spiritual disciplines in your journey with Jesus.
- c. Write a brief statement on the place of spiritual disciplines in the Christian life (*You will do this under the "Putting it into Practice" section below*).

At Home:

Plan to spend 30 minutes each day or an additional block of time for this assignment.

- a. At home each day sit quietly before God for a few moments and meditate on the scripture passage (John 15:1-8).
- b. Each day work through steps two through five in the "Six Steps for Discerning a Plan for Your Practice of Spiritual Disciplines" (see next page). The first and last steps will be done in class.
- c. Come to class with your "rule" or practice for next year.

Putting it into Practice

Six Steps for Developing a Plan for Growing in Spiritual Disciplines

Use the work we have done to date to help you develop a plan for spiritual disciplines:

SESSION 7 IN CLASS:

1. Consider the nature and function of spiritual disciplines in the life of the Christian

Prepare yourself for renewed engagement with God by informing yourself again about the nature of the journey with God and the place and function of spiritual disciplines in that journey. Suggestions for such preparation include the following:

- a. Read John 15:1-8 as a group (*next page*).
- b. Then reflect privately on the place of spiritual disciplines in your journey with Jesus.
- c. Write a brief statement in your journal or your Notebook on the place of spiritual disciplines in the Christian life. When done, break into pairs and share what you wrote with your partner.

John 15:1-8 *“I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful. You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. Remain in me, and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.”*

“I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. If anyone does not remain in me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you. This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.”

Goal: *To be able to say in your own words what the biblical or theological rationale is for practicing spiritual disciplines and to share this with your mentor.*

AT HOME EACH DAY:

2. Reflect upon your present spiritual needs and your current spiritual practices

Let your present experience help guide your future practice of spiritual disciplines by giving some time in reflection about your needs and experience. Suggestions for such reflection include the following:

- (a) Each day until the next session, allow yourself to simply sit and reflect upon your own life and your spiritual needs. What are the things that are going well? In what areas of your life is there spiritual weakness, struggle, or failure? Make a list of your spiritual needs.
- (b) List your current practices alongside your spiritual needs and ask how these practices are nurturing you in Christ or what areas are not being nurtured or addressed.
- (c) *Optional:* Read one or several chapters on spiritual disciplines such as Foster, *Celebration of Discipline*, chapter 1 and/or Thompson, *Soul Feast*, chapters 1 & 2. (These and other books are listed in the “Resources” on p. 130.)

Goal: *To be able to write a simple sentence for each area of spiritual need or each area of spiritual growth in your life at this time. To review these areas with your mentor in Session 8.*

3. Pray, asking God to guide you in your pursuit of disciplines

Recognize that your spiritual desire comes not only from within but is also given as a gift from God. As you move into the development of your Growth Plan for spiritual disciplines, write a simple prayer to pray each day asking God (a) to give you a hunger and desire for what you need spiritually, (b) to motivate you to engage meaningfully with God and (c) to be faithful in your commitment to spiritual disciplines.

Goal: *To write a prayer in behalf of your own spiritual growth that you will pray for a period of time designated by yourself. (i.e. one month, six months, etc.)*

4. Choose specific spiritual disciplines to practice

For this step, you will need to refer to p. 130. For each of the elements listed on p. 130, prayerfully pick one or more disciplines that you will pursue for the next six months. In the practice of spiritual disciplines, it is essential to remain steadfast for a time to let the discipline be woven into your regular experience of life and to allow God to use this discipline to help shape your life according to God's designs.

Goal: *To identify specific disciplines that will be included in your spiritual Growth Plan.*

5. Establish a time and place for regular encounter with God

A key factor in the practice of spiritual disciplines is to have an established time and place for your encounter with God. This is true for both individual and corporate experience.

Time is a critical element in our life of devotion to God both as individuals and as a community. Few today in our society "have" time for this. They need to "take" time. This means planning for a specific time on a regular basis. Erratic patterns erode the practice and significance of spiritual disciplines. It is essential to be very intentional concerning time.

Place is equally important in our practice of disciplines. Different persons and personalities have different needs with regard to place. It will be important for you to find the place most conducive to you meeting with Jesus on a regular basis. It is essential to be very intentional concerning place.

Goal: *To include in your Growth Plan a specific time and place for your practice of disciplines.*

SESSION 8 IN CLASS:

6. Share your journey with another and evaluate your plan from time to time

The journey with Jesus is not meant to be lived in isolation. Individualism is a detriment to spiritual growth and vitality. God's design for our transformation is to work through sharing our lives with one another through mutual confession, mutual encouragement, fellowship in Christ, etc.

In our individualistic culture we often find it difficult to share in-depth with anyone else. This is even more so for pastors who often feel a need to be guarded with the struggles in their own journey. But, the New Testament pattern of "one-anothering" as part of the mission of the church is unequivocally clear.

So being intentional about sharing a means of accountability for one's life is equally important to our being intentional about our time with God alone.

Goal: *To arrange for a specific plan for accountability for your spiritual life. This means that you will choose a specific person, for specific times with a clearly developed mutual agenda for such an accountability relationship.*

Resources for Working with Spiritual Disciplines

Bohler, Carolyn Stahl. *Opening to God: Guided Imagery Meditation on Scripture*, Upper Room, 1996.

Foster, Richard. *Celebration of Discipline: The Path to Spiritual Growth*, Harper & Row, 1998.

Foster, Richard. *Prayer: Finding the Heart's True Home*, HarperSanFrancisco, 1992.

Groff, Kent Ira. *Active Spirituality: A Guide for Seekers and Ministers*.

Hart, Thomas N. *The Art of Christian Listening*, Paulist, 1980.

Job, Reuben P. and Norman Shawchuck. *A Guide to Prayer for Ministers and Other Servants*, The Upper Room, 1983.

Jones, Timothy. *Finding A Spiritual Friend: How Friends and Mentors Can Make Your Faith Grow*, The Upper Room, 1998.

Mulholland, M. Robert, Jr. *Shaped by the Word: The Power of Scripture in Spiritual Formation*, The Upper Room, 1985.

Nouwen, Henri. *The Wounded Healer*, Image Books, 1979.

Nouwen, Henri. *The Way of the Heart*, Ballantine, 1981.

Nouwen, Henri. *The Return of the Prodigal: A Story of Homecoming*, Image Books, 1992.

Smith, James Bryan with Lynda Graybeal. *A Spiritual Formation Workbook*.

Thompson, Marjorie. *Soul Feast: An Invitation to the Christian Spiritual Life*, Westminster John Knox, 1995.

Vest, Norvene. *Gathered in the Word: Praying the Scripture in Small Groups*, Upper Room, 1996.

Willard, Dallas. *The Spirit of the Disciplines: Understanding How God Changes Lives*, Harper & Row, 1988.

Why should we set goals?

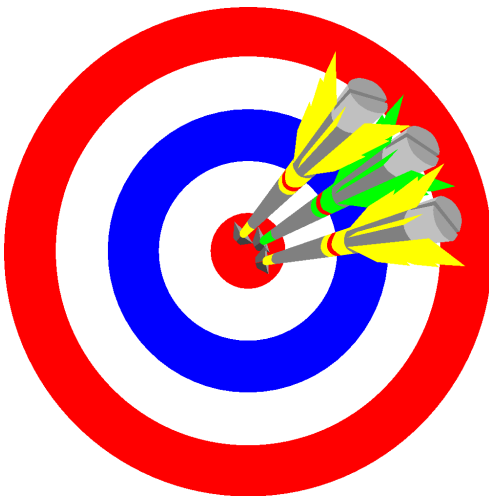
Goals exercise our faith. Goal-setting invites us to exercise our faith.

Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see. (Heb. 11:1)

Faith is the muscle of God-centered living. Faith lives toward God's future. Faith builds an ark or a hospital, a temple or a meetinghouse. Faith plants a church or creates a drug rehabilitation program.

Faith leads to planning and goal-setting. We set goals because of our faith, not as a substitute for faith. The better our planning (faithing), the more we are attuned to God's future and the less likely we are to worry. The Spirit-filled life is not a life of sheer spontaneity, but of Spirit-guided imagination and planning. God made us able to imagine the future. Imagination, creativity, and hope are a reflection of God's image in us, and equip us to plan. Failing to plan is not just planning to fail. It's a failure of faith.

A person who does not have a goal is led by those who do.



The next page describes five steps in setting, planning and achieving a goal. The process revolves around asking a series of questions.

1. Who am I? Where am I going? I must learn about myself.
2. What areas of my life will need to grow to achieve this goal? Being, Knowing, Doing, Leading
3. What are my Learning Objectives? **SMART goals** are prepared in this step.
4. How will I achieve my goals? A course, coach, seminar, workshop, other resources.
When will I start and when will I finish?

5.

Developing a Growth Plan

<p>1. Discovering myself.</p> <p>Who am I?</p> <p>Where am I going?</p>	<p>2. Identify areas for growth.</p> <p>Being, Knowing, Doing, Leading</p>	<p>3. What are my Learning Objectives?</p>	<p>4. How will I achieve my goals? Course, Seminar, Workshop, Other Resources</p>
<p>Who am I?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Reflect on past learning and education experiences ● Discover my spiritual gifts; my passion ● Understand self through DISC ● Understand my emotions and how they affect my relationships <p>Where am I going? What is God's call?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Personal Purpose Statement ● Life verse ● Feedback from spouse, family members, mentor, pastor, friends. 	<p>Since "being" or spiritual growth is at the core of your identity and Personal Purpose, you will identify specific spiritual disciplines for your Growth Plan.</p> <p>For the remaining three areas, identify one growth or learning goal for each of the four growth areas (or for two of the three growth areas):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Knowing: How will I strengthen my understanding of the Bible? ● Doing: What ministry skill would I most like to sharpen during the coming year? ● Leading: What leadership skill do I sense God wanting to strengthen in me? 	<p>For each selected growth area state a learning goal: what CHANGE I want to see in myself in knowledge, skills, behavior, values, or attitudes</p> <p>The goal is my destination. It is</p> <p>an OUTCOME (what)</p> <p>not a PROCESS (how)</p> <p>It focuses on what I expect to know and be able to do after the learning experience.</p> <p>A smart goal is:</p> <p>Simple and specific Measurable and motivating Achievable Relevant Trackable and time bound</p>	<p>HOW will I accomplish this learning or growth goal? What learning or growth experience (how) will enable me to achieve this goal (what)?</p> <p>First identify the means, the approach. This will often be a course, seminar, workshop, or other guided learning experience.</p> <p>What other resources do I need (if any)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ people ○ books/tapes/videos ○ financial <p>Is this the best learning approach for me? Can I fit it in my schedule? Can I afford it? Can I handle the work? Will it meet my learning objectives?</p>

The following pages will give you some practice in developing and sharpening goals. The next several pages allow you to practice goal setting and writing **SMART goals**. **SMART goals** use the letters of the word “SMART” as an acronym to help you remember how to prepare them.

Writing a SMART goal

Simple and specific

Measurable (and motivating)

Achievable

Relevant (meaningful to you or to your work – related to your goals)

Trackable and time bound

MART goals sharpen goal setting:

*For practice, ask these questions to write a “SMART check-up.” The chart on the next page compares general, fuzzy goals with specific, precise statements that represent **SMART Goals**.*

Example of a Fuzzy Goal		Example of a SMART Goal
<p>Simple and Specific</p> <p>A goal should answer the questions, “Where am I going?” and “How will I know when I get there?” or “How will I know that I know?”</p> <p>Measurable and Motivating</p> <p>If you can’t measure it, you may not be able to know if you meet it.</p> <p>Is the goal emotionally compelling? Is it motivating or de-motivating?</p> <p>Result-oriented goals should take you in the direction of your Personal Purpose Statement.</p>	<p>To have a more meaningful quiet time.</p> <p>Don’t let ministry overrun my family life.</p>	<p>To spend at least 15 minutes daily with God and his Word; take one verse with me through the day.</p> <p>Give attention to my family by giving:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) at least 30 minutes of undivided attention to my spouse every day 2) at least 30 minutes of undivided attention to each child each week
<p>Achievable</p> <p>A SMART goal is one you know you can reach while still making you stretch. Stress, low-esteem, give-in, or give-up can result if your goal is out of reach.</p> <p>CAUTION: Do not aim too low either. Goals that don’t challenge you become meaningless.</p>	<p>Learn more about interpreting the Bible.</p>	<p>Develop skills in understanding, interpreting, and applying Bible texts by</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) read <i>How to Read the Bible for all it’s Worth</i> 2) discuss it with my mentor. 3) share what I’ve learned with my small group (or Sunday school class)
<p>Relevant</p> <p>Are the learning activities relevant to your learning goals and objectives?</p> <p>Is the goal relevant to your growth objective? Will it contribute to achieving your Personal Purpose?</p>	<p>Learn to lead a meeting more effectively.</p>	<p>Read a book on how to lead a meeting so that the meeting is efficient, productive, and motivating. Have my mentor or other observer assess my performance and give me tips for improvement.</p>
<p>Trackable and Time Bound</p> <p>A smart goal can be broken down into shorter segments that enable you to check your progress and evaluate the quality of your effort.</p> <p>Set a start date and a finish date. It helps prevent procrastination.</p>	<p>Learn to be a better listener.</p>	<p>Develop my listening skills by taking a Life Seminar (Apples of Gold) this spring.</p>

Table Group Exercise

Practice writing SMART goals for one of the goals below. See the examples in the chart for learning to play the guitar in parentheses, below. Select one item from the list below, and, as a group, develop five Smart Goal statements.

Select one goal from this list, then as a group, write five SMART Goal statements on the chart.

1. I want to have regular times of prayer and Bible reading with my family.
2. I want our small group to welcome some new members.

Now evaluate whether each statement meets the five SMART criteria explained and demonstrated on the chart on the previous page and check Yes or No based on your evaluation as a group.

SMART Goal Statement			Meets criteria
S	Is the goal Simple and Specific?	(For example, "I want to teach myself to play guitar.")	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
M	Is the goal Measurable and Motivating?	(I will use the Hal Leonard self-teaching guitar lesson series.)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
A	Is the goal Achievable	(I will learn the guitar to a beginning level.)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
R	Is the goal Relevant?	(I want to play guitar to accent my personal devotions.)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
T	Is the goal Trackable and Time Bound?	(Within 12 months, I will complete the Guitar lesson book.)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Follow the progression of the development of a SMART goal in the following examples. Each of the following charts focuses on a different growth area: **being, knowing, doing and leading**. You will be following this same process as you create your growth plan.

Growth Goal Example 1

Growth Area: Being - spiritual disciplines

What: develop a more meaningful quiet time

How: by spending time every day with God

When: for the next year

S	Is the goal Simple and Specific?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Have a more meaningful quiet time	
M	Is the goal Measurable and Motivating?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Have a more meaningful quiet time• Spend at least 30 minutes each day meditating on scripture, praying, and listening to God	
A	Is the goal Achievable	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Have a more meaningful quiet time• Spend at least 30 minutes each day meditating on scripture, praying, and listening to God• Get up 30 minutes earlier so I can begin my day with God and enjoy a cup of coffee with my devotions before the rest of the household wakes up	
R	Is the goal Relevant?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Have a more meaningful quiet time• Spend at least 30 minutes each day meditating on scripture, praying, and listening to God• Get up 30 minutes earlier so I can begin my day with God and enjoy a cup of coffee with my devotions before the rest of the household wakes up• Take one verse with me by writing it on a card and reflecting on it at different times throughout the day	
T	Is the goal Trackable and Time Bound?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Have a more meaningful quiet time• Spend at least 30 minutes each day meditating on scripture, praying, and listening to God• Get up at 5:30 a.m. daily (earlier if schedule demands) so I can begin my day with God and enjoy a cup of coffee with my devotions before the rest of the household wakes up• Take one verse with me by writing it on a card and reflecting on it at least twice during the day, applying to my daily situation• Begin in April and continue for the next year; evaluate this discipline with my mentor every quarter	

Growth Goal Example 2

Growth Area: Knowing - Bible interpretation

What: learn more about interpreting the Bible

How: by reading an excellent book on that subject

When: and discussing it with my mentor chapter by chapter

S	Is the goal Simple and Specific?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Learn more about Bible interpretation	
M	Is the goal Measurable and Motivating?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Learn more about Bible interpretation• Read <i>How to Read the Bible for All It's Worth</i> by Gordon Fee and Douglas Stuart	
A	Is the goal Achievable	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Learn more about interpreting the Bible• Read <i>How to Read the Bible for All It's Worth</i> by Fee and Stuart• Read a chapter a month and discuss with my mentor to make sure I understand what I'm reading and learning	
R	Is the goal Relevant?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Learn more about Bible interpretation• Read <i>How to Read the Bible for All It's Worth</i> by Fee and Stuart• Read a chapter a month and discuss with my mentor to make sure I understand what I'm reading and learning• Present a 15-minute summary of one chapter to our leadership team meeting each month	
T	Is the goal Trackable and Time Bound?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Learn more about Bible interpretation• Read <i>How to Read the Bible for All It's Worth</i> by Fee and Stuart• Read a chapter a month and discuss with my mentor to make sure I understand what I'm reading and learning• Present a 15-minute summary of one chapter to our leadership team meeting each month• Buy the book by March 1; begin sharing with my mentor at our April meeting; start sharing with the leadership team in May	

Growth Goal Example 3

Growth Area: Doing - preaching

What: improve my preaching

How: by reading a book on preaching and getting feedback from congregation members

When: during the next year

S	Is the goal Simple and Specific?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improve my preaching	
M	Is the goal Measurable and Motivating?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improve my preaching• Study my way through <i>The Practice of Preaching</i> by Paul Scott Wilson	
A	Is the goal Achievable?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improve my preaching• Study my way through <i>The Practice of Preaching</i> by Paul Scott Wilson• Find three people in the congregation who will intentionally listen to and evaluate one of my sermons each month	
R	Is the goal Relevant?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improve my preaching• Study my way through <i>The Practice of Preaching</i> by Paul Scott Wilson• Find three people in the congregation who will intentionally listen to and evaluate one of my sermons each month• Video tape two sermons and ask for feedback from someone I respect	
T	Is the goal Trackable and Time Bound?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improve my preaching• Study my way through <i>The Practice of Preaching</i> by Paul Scott Wilson• Find three people in the congregation who will intentionally listen to and evaluate one of my sermons each month• Video tape two sermons and ask for feedback from someone I respect• Buy Wilson book by Sept. 1; develop listening group by Nov. 1; tape sermons in January and June, and arrange for feedback within two weeks after each sermon is taped	

Growth Goal Example 4

Growth Area: Leading - leading meetings

What: learn how to lead meetings better

How: by getting feedback from my leadership team members

When: during the next year

S	Is the goal Simple and Specific?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Learn how to lead a meeting more effectively	
M	Is the goal Measurable and Motivating?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Learn how to lead a meeting more effectively• Read a book and watch a video on this subject	
A	Is the goal Achievable?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Learn how to lead a meeting more effectively• Read a book and watch a video on this subject• Identify the key principles and techniques for making a meeting work	
R	Is the goal Relevant?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Learn how to lead a meeting more effectively• Read a book and watch a video on this subject• Identify the key principles and techniques for making a meeting work• Share these principles with the leadership team and invite their feedback on how effective our meeting was at the end of that meeting	
T	Is the goal Trackable and Time Bound?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Learn how to lead a meeting more effectively• Read a book and watch a video on this subject• Identify the key principles and techniques for making a meeting work• Share these principles with the leadership team and invite their feedback on how effective our meeting was at the end of that meeting• Select book and video by June 1; read book by Sept. 1; watch video by Oct. 1; identify key principles and techniques by Nov. 1; share with team and invite evaluation by end of November; do this in another meeting before the end of the year (May 30)	

Table Group or Home Exercise

Choose any one of the four growth goals from the four charts above. Create a new, different HOW statement for the growth goal you selected. Then, for practice, write a new SMART check-up in the blank column to the right. For example, on the “doing” growth goal, you might change the “how” from reading a book to taking a preaching class. (Try not to be influenced by the SMART goals in the left-hand column. Be creative!)

Work on your own

1. Using the Learning/Growth Goal worksheets, develop one learning or growth goal (what) for two of the four Growth Areas - being, knowing, doing, leading. Make copies as needed.
2. Develop a way to achieve each objective (how) that is time bound (when)
3. Do a SMART goal check-up

Each person shares growth goals with Table Group

- Share with another person the growth areas and goals that you may be focusing on for the next two years. Explain how you chose these goals. Explain how they relate to your personal purpose.
- Explain how you strengthened these goals through the SMART check-up

Give feedback to the one who shared

- Be affirming
- Provide specific, candid feedback on strengths and weaknesses as you see it.
- Do a quick SMART review.
- What other resources and learning opportunities would you suggest in order to master new skills or apply new learnings?

What did you (as a listener) learn from the other person’s growth goals?

Discuss together – whole group

What barriers or obstacles might you encounter as you implement these learning or growth goals? How might you be able to deal with these problems?

In light of your current family, ministry and work responsibilities, what one or two things do you need to let go of in order to make time for your Growth Plan?

Remember that achieving a goal always costs something.

Are you willing to pay the price that will be required to meet your growth goals?

Homework for Session Seven

1. Repeat the “Developing a Spiritual Practice” exercise each day (30 minutes). The end result should be a plan for practicing spiritual disciplines.
2. Until the next session, read and review session 7.
3. **Review** the four growth areas – Being, Knowing, Doing, and Leading. **Prayerfully consider** how the Lord may be inviting you to grow in each of these areas and complete the Growth Goal worksheets for each one (demonstration copies and blank worksheets are at the end of this chapter, below). Which one(s) do you think should be a higher priority for you?
4. **Transfer** your growth goals from your four Growth Goal worksheets (Being, Knowing, Doing, and Leading) onto the chart at the end of Session 7. Bring your Growth Plan along to Discovery session 8.
5. Complete the Discovery evaluation sheet at the end of the Discovery document so you can turn it in during Session 8.
6. Make sure your mentor knows the date, time and directions for attending Discovery Session 8 with you.
7. Read through Chapter 8 of the Discovery Handbook **before** the next class.

Demo Copy**Learning/Growth Goal Worksheet****Growth Area: Focus**

(being, knowing, doing, leading)

Christ, Character, Calling, Competency, Community

Identify the growth area: *Character or being*Focus: *I want to see more patience in my life***What**

(destination or goal—how you sense God calling you to change and grow—with regard to knowledge, skills, behavior, values, attitudes)

Write your growth goal:

*By 2015, I will no longer use the silent treatment on my husband when our opinions differ.***How** *Instruction, Experience, Spiritual, Relational*

(means, approach, course, seminar, workshop, books, resources)

List the learning activities that will help you accomplish this goal:

1. *Organize a daily note book & tally system*
2. *Do a scripture study around "patience", and spend time in prayer & contemplation asking God to change my heart*
3. *Ask my husband monthly how he feels I'm doing with my use or non-use of silent treatments.*
4. *Read the book 'Patience and the Heart' by Zac Zoolu*

WhenGive the dates you plan to start and finish these learning activities. Give any important checkpoints along the way. *Begin March 2014; End & Evaluate January 2015***SMART check-up**

- ☒ Is it simple and specific?
- ☒ Is it measurable and motivating?
- ☒ Is it achievable?
- ☒ Is it relevant?

- ☒ Is it trackable and time bound?

- ☐ Should this goal be more transformational?
How can you make this goal more transformational?

Transformational Goal: By 2015, I will be eager to dialogue with my husband when we differ in opinion, never desiring to give him the silent treatment.

Leadership Development GROWTH PLAN - Example Copy

Mentoree's name: The Sunshine Congregation: Willow Street Memorial

Mentor's name: Tommy Trustworthy Date: from March 2014 to January 2015

Growth Areas Being, Knowing, Doing, Leading, Christ, Character, Calling, Competencies, Community	My growth area <u>focus</u>	WHAT destination or <u>goal</u> how do I want to change?	HOW how am I going to get there? course, seminar, workshop, etc.	WHEN start date end date
Character Being	To see more patience in my life	SMART: By 2015, I will no longer use the silent tx on my husband when our opinions differ. <u>Transformational</u> : By 2015 I will be eager to dialogue with my husband when <u>we</u> differ in opinion. Never desiring to give him the silent treatment.	- organize notebook with halfly system - Scripture study with prayer & contemplation - Husband ✓ in monthly - Read "Patience and the Heart" - Zac Zeein	Start: March 2014 End: January 2015
Leading Competencies Testing Calling?	grow in my ability to teach Adults	SMART - I will find, prepare teach and receive feedback for 5 different adult learning experiences by April, 2015. <u>Transformational</u> - I'll be so well loved as a teacher by April 2015 that people will be asking me to teach rather than me seeking teaching opportunities	- Check out and study LMC teacher resources - Seek & find a teacher mentor who can help me. - Ask if I can teach Adult Sunday School. - Tell 5 people about my dream and ask for champions. - Take all opportunities given seriously with a teachable, confident spirit.	Start: April 2014 end: April 2015

Learning/Growth Goal Worksheet

Growth Area & Focus (being, knowing, doing, leading--select 1)

Identify the growth area:

Focus:

What

(destination or goal—how you sense God calling you to change and grow—with regard to knowledge, skills, behavior, values, attitudes)

Write your growth goal:

How

(means, approach, course, seminar, workshop, books, resources)

List the learning activities that will help you accomplish this goal:

1.

2.

3.

4.

When

Give dates you plan to start and finish these learning activities. Give important check-points along the way.

SMART check-up

- ☐ Is it simple and specific?
- ☐ Is it measurable and motivating?
- ☐ Is it achievable?
- ☐ Is it relevant?
- ☐ Is it trackable and time bound?
- ☐ Is it transformational?

Learning/Growth Goal Worksheet

Growth Area & Focus (being, knowing, doing, leading--select 1)

Identify the growth area:

Focus:

What

(destination or goal—how you sense God calling you to change and grow—with regard to knowledge, skills, behavior, values, attitudes)

Write your growth goal:

How

(means, approach, course, seminar, workshop, books, resources)

List the learning activities that will help you accomplish this goal:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

When

Give dates you plan to start and finish these learning activities. Give important check-points along the way.

SMART check-up

- ☐ Is it simple and specific?
- ☐ Is it measurable and motivating?
- ☐ Is it achievable?
- ☐ Is it relevant?
- ☐ Is it trackable and time bound?
- ☐ Is it transformational?

Learning/Growth Goal Worksheet

Growth Area & Focus (being, knowing, doing, leading--select 1)

Identify the growth area:

Focus:

What

(destination or goal—how you sense God calling you to change and grow—with regard to knowledge, skills, behavior, values, attitudes)

Write your growth goal:

How

(means, approach, course, seminar, workshop, books, resources)

List the learning activities that will help you accomplish this goal:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

When

Give dates you plan to start and finish these learning activities. Give important check-points along the way.

SMART check-up

- ☐ Is it simple and specific?
- ☐ Is it measurable and motivating?
- ☐ Is it achievable?
- ☐ Is it relevant?
- ☐ Is it trackable and time bound?
- ☐ Is it transformational?

Learning/Growth Goal Worksheet

Growth Area & Focus (being, knowing, doing, leading--select 1)

Identify the growth area:

Focus:

What

(destination or goal—how you sense God calling you to change and grow—with regard to knowledge, skills, behavior, values, attitudes)

Write your growth goal:

How

(means, approach, course, seminar, workshop, books, resources)

List the learning activities that will help you accomplish this goal:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

When

Give dates you plan to start and finish these learning activities. Give important check-points along the way.

SMART check-up

- ☐ Is it simple and specific?
- ☐ Is it measurable and motivating?
- ☐ Is it achievable?
- ☐ Is it relevant?
- ☐ Is it trackable and time bound?
- ☐ Is it transformational?

Leadership Development GROWTH PLAN



Mentoree's name: _____ Congregation: _____

Mentor's name _____ Date: from _____ to _____

Growth Areas	My growth areas	WHAT destination or goal how do I want to change?	HOW how am I going to get there? course, seminar, workshop, etc.	WHEN start date end date
Being Spiritual Disciplines				
Relationships -character/friendships -marriage/family/sexuality				
Calling/Vocation				
Knowing Bible (Old & New Testament)				
Anabaptist history & theology				
People (sociology & ethics)				
Other				

Growth Areas	My growth areas	WHAT destination or goal how do I want to change?	HOW how am I going to get there? course, seminar, workshop, etc.	WHEN start date end date
Doing Communication Caregiving Leading worship Evangelism & mission Specialized ministry				
Leading Listening Attitudes Emotions Planning Time management				

8 Transforming Friendship

*As iron sharpens iron,
so one man sharpens another.
(Prov. 27:17)*

*Two are better than one,
because they have a good return for their work:
If one falls down, his friend can help him up.
But pity the man who falls
and has no one to help him up!
A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.
(Ecclesiastes 4:9, 10, 12b)*

*Follow my example,
as I follow the example of Christ.
(I Corinthians 11:1)*

Objectives for Discovery Eight

1. Understand what a formal mentoring relationship is and why it is important.
2. Learn from biblical models of mentoring.
3. Learn how to build a strong, life-changing relationship with a Spiritual Friend.
4. For mentors/spiritual friends: review Spiritual Gifts, Passion Statement, Personal Purpose Statement, Plan for practicing spiritual disciplines, and Growth Plan with mentorees.
5. Continue the journey of Discovery over the next year as you pursue your Growth Plan and Life Purpose with the support of your mentor/spiritual friend.

Schedule:

Devotional

Summarizing Conversations (20 minutes)

Each Discovery participant has 12 minutes to summarize for their spiritual friend/mentor their work in Discovery:

- a. Spiritual Needs and Growth (see p. 139)
- b. Spiritual Gifts (see p.20)
- b. Passion Statement (see p.31)
- c. Personal Purpose Statement (see p.89, 108, and 110)
- d. Plan for practicing spiritual disciplines (see p.139-140)
- e. Growth Plan (see plan p.160-161)

Eight minutes for follow-up and conversation. Whole group discussion, commenting on what was heard or said.

Spiritual Discipline: Sharing Your Spiritual Friendship

Mentoring

Let's review what we've accomplished so far in Discovery

- We've learned more about spiritual disciplines and have begun to develop a plan for growing in spiritual discipline.
- We've learned more about our spiritual gifts and about "emotional intelligence" - the importance of being in touch with our emotions and learning to manage them constructively and personally.
- We've learned about our unique personality.
- We've developed a Personal Purpose Statement.
- We've developed at least the first draft of a Growth Plan which will guide our growth in being, knowing, doing and leading during the next six months.
- We've found a Spiritual Friend who is willing to walk with us as we pursue our Growth Plan and Personal Purpose.

And now in Discovery 8 we will learn more about mentoring. And we'll be commissioned for the journey that lies ahead.

We hope your mentor is with you this evening.

Welcome mentors!

EXERCISE: SHARE SPIRITUAL RULE

Share your Spiritual Rule with your Spiritual Friend/mentor and allow the person to comment.

The journey with Jesus is not meant to be lived in isolation. Individualism is a detriment to spiritual growth and vitality. God's design for our transformation is to work through sharing our lives with one another through mutual confession, mutual encouragement, fellowship in Christ, etc.

In our individualistic culture we often find it difficult to share in-depth with anyone else. This is even more so for pastors who often feel a need to be guarded with the struggles in their own journey. But, the New Testament pattern of "one-anothering" as part of the mission of the church is unequivocally clear.

So being intentional about sharing a means of accountability for one's life is equally important to our being intentional about our time with God alone.

Remember that spiritual disciplines only open us to deeper relationship with God. They do not "make us more spiritual."

***Goal:** To arrange for a specific plan for accountability for your spiritual rule. This means that you will choose a specific person, for specific times with a clearly developed mutual agenda for such an accountability relationship.*

SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINE: SHARING SPIRITUAL FRIENDSHIP

Instructions.

- Pair up with Spiritual Friend for 20 minutes.
- Find a quiet spot. Share with your Spiritual Friend your experience of discernment during the past weeks as you finalized a growth plan that you will execute over the next year.
- Allow Spiritual Friend to ask clarifying questions. Set a date, time, place and frequency for meetings. Set up the first meeting date.
- Spiritual Friend prays a prayer of consecration over you for your commitment to God's purposes in your life over the next year as you begin to work your plan with accountability.

A modest mentor, a worldwide impact

I came from a broken home. My parents were separated before I was born, and neither one paid much attention to my spiritual condition. To put it bluntly, I could have lived, died, and gone to hell without anyone even bothering to care.

But Walt cared. He was part of a tiny church in my neighborhood that developed a passion to affect its community for Christ.

Walt's passion was to reach nine-and ten-year-old boys like me with the gospel. I'll never forget the Saturday morning I met him. I was sprawled out on a Philadelphia sidewalk playing marbles. Suddenly someone was standing beside me. I looked up to see this gangly guy towering over me – all six feet, four inches of him. My mouth sort of dropped open.

"Hey, son, how would you like to go to Sunday school?" he asked.

That was an unfortunate question. To my mind, anything that had the word "school" in it had to be bad news. So I shook my head no.

But Walt was just getting started. "How would you like to play marbles?" he asked, squatting down.

Now he was talking my language!

"Sure!" I replied, and quickly set up the game. As the best marble player on the block, I felt supremely confident that I could whip this challenger fairly easily.

Would you believe he beat me in every single game! In fact, he captured every marble I had. In the process, he captured my heart. I may have lost a game and a bit of pride that day, but I gained something infinitely more important – the friendship of a man who cared. A big man, an older man, a man who literally came down to my level by kneeling to play a game of marbles. From then on, wherever Walt was that's where I wanted to be.

Walt built into my life over the next several years in a way that marked me forever. He used to take me and the other boys in his Sunday school class hiking. I'll never forget those times. He had a bad heart, and I'm sure we didn't do it any good, running him all over the woods the way we did. But he didn't seem to mind, because he cared. In fact, he was probably the first person to show me unconditional love.

He was also a model of faithfulness. I can't remember a time that he ever showed up to his Sunday school class unprepared. Not that he was the most scintillating teacher in the world. In fact, he had almost no training for that. Vocationally, he worked in the tool and die trade. But he was for real, and he was also creative. He found ways to involve us boys in the learning process – an approach that made a lasting contribution to my own style of teaching.

Overall, Walt incarnated Christ for me. And not only for me, but for thirteen other boys in my neighborhood, all of whom also came from broken homes. Remarkably, eleven of us went on to pursue careers as vocational Christian workers – which is ironic, given that Walt himself completed school only through the sixth grade.

Howard Hendricks
Internationally known teacher and writer
As Iron Sharpens Iron (Moody Press, 1995), pp. 13-15

Spiritual Friendship in the Life of the Church

The practice of Spiritual Friendship is an intentional focus on personal spiritual growth. It is a covenant relationship that goes deeper than the usual Sunday school or small group experience because it attends carefully to the whole of life including one's inner life and personal commitments. It is one of several Spiritual Companionship practices in the church to nurture the spiritual life of its members by actively participating in the New Testament practice of "one anothering"

In the New Testament church, we find a lively interaction among members who are called to love, support, encourage and challenge one another to spiritual growth.¹ This lively interaction is expressed with concern for the spiritual growth of each member. Each of us needs a "spiritual friend" to help us be open to God's transforming presence and remain faithful to Jesus in daily life. This call to help each other be faithful on the spiritual journey is particularly evident in passages such as the following:

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God."(Col 3:16).

Therefore encourage one another and build up each other as indeed you are doing (2 Thess 5:11)

But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called "today," so that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin (Heb 3:13).

And let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds (Heb 10:24).

Such support and accountability has been practiced in the church through the centuries. Augustine, a great fourth century leader said, "no one can walk without a guide." Aelred of Rievaulx of the twelfth-century said, "Friendship is like a step to raise us to the love and knowledge of God." "Giving and receiving counsel" was essential for all sixteenth century Anabaptists. In the eighteenth century John Wesley organized "class meetings" for members to meet in small groups for mutual counsel, consolation, and to instruct, rebuke, exhort and pray with one another. In our times the practice of Spiritual Friendship among Christians has been encouraged by writers such as Richard Foster, Tilden Edwards Kenneth Leech and Timothy Jones.

In Spiritual Friendship, two persons agree to give particular attention to each other's spiritual journey. As friends they meet regularly to talk openly and candidly about how they are experiencing God. They seek to listen deeply to one another, to understand each other's journey, and to encourage and pray with one another.

Spiritual Friends usually meet weekly or biweekly for sixty to ninety minutes. A helpful discipline is to agree, after an initial gathering routine, to divide the time equally between the two persons. One person gives prayerful attention as the other is sharing. The friend listens not only to the experiences of his or her companion but also attends to the presence of the Spirit and the movement of God in the other's life.

Having several questions as focus for sharing each time can facilitate this experience. Such questions might include the following:

1. What has been your experience of life since we last met? (This may include relationship with self, work, family, church, etc)
2. What have been your struggles or temptations since we met?
3. How have you experienced (or not experienced) God during this time?
4. What are your desires (prayers) for the coming days?

¹ In the New Testament church members are encouraged to love one another, bear one another's burdens, bear with one another, encourage one another, exhort one another, provoke one another to love and good deeds, encourage one another, confess to one another, pray for one another, etc.

Finally, it is important to recognize that the spiritual friendship goes deeper as the relationship grows. Having a clear covenant, commitment and structure is important for the security that is needed to develop trust. Still it may take time to become trustworthy friends. Progress may be slow and cautious. As there is a growing sense of mutual support, acceptance and appreciation there will also be greater trust, deeper sharing and a growing sense of God presence and work in the soul of each one. A genuine Spiritual Friendship will move ever more toward a more profound I-Thou relationship with one another and with God.

Marcus Smucker, 4/07

The Mentoring Relationship

I thank God, whom I serve, as my forefathers did, with a clear conscience, as night and day I constantly remember you in my prayers. Recalling your tears, I long to see you, so that I may be filled with joy...Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity. Be diligent in these matters; give yourself wholly to them, so that everyone may see your progress. (II Tim. 1:3-4; I Tim. 4:12, 15)

Every time I say your name in prayer - which is practically all the time - I thank God for you, the God I worship with my whole life in the tradition of my ancestors. I miss you a lot, especially when I remember that last tearful goodbye, and I look forward to a joy-packed reunion.

...don't let anyone put you down because you're young. Teach believers with your life: by word, by demeanor, by love, by faith, by integrity...Cultivate these things. Immerse yourself in them. The people will all see you mature right before their eyes! Keep a firm grasp on your character and your teaching.

Mentor Paul to Mentoree Timothy (II Tim. 1:3-4; I Tim. 4:12, 15 Msg)

As Christian mentors we find inspiration in wisdom (personified as Lady wisdom in the *Message* paraphrase) in the Book of Proverbs.

*Blessed is the man who finds wisdom, the man who gains understanding,
for she is more profitable than silver and yields better returns than gold.
She is more precious than rubies; nothing you desire can compare with her.
Long life is in her right hand; in her left hand are riches and honor.
Her ways are pleasant ways, and all her paths are peace. (Prov. 3:13-17)*

*You're blessed when you meet Lady Wisdom
when you make friends with Madame Insight.
She's worth far more than money in the bank;
her friendship is better than a big salary.
Her value exceeds all the trappings of wealth;
nothing you could wish for holds a candle to her. (Prov. 3:13-17 Msg)*

Jesus is our finest example of mentoring:

I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you. (John 15:15)

I'm no longer calling you servants because servants don't understand what their master is thinking and planning. No, I've named you friends because I've let you in on everything I've heard from the Father." (John 15:15 Msg)

All this I have spoken while still with you. But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. (John 14:25-26)

And when he left, Jesus gave us as his parting gift the Holy Spirit to be a continuing mentor for us. (John 14:25-26 Msg)

We are also encouraged by the examples of mentoring relationships in the Bible such as Moses and Joshua, Elizabeth and Mary, Paul and Barnabas, and Priscilla and Aquilla with Apollos. Let us look at several of these in greater detail.

Mentoring is very important for the nurture, development, and transformation of believers. Christian and Anabaptist values are no longer as readily communicated by social context.

We need to encourage each other to grow in love for the Lord.

Biblical models of mentoring

Paul and Timothy

Acts 16:1-5

II Tim. 1:3-7; 2:14-15; 3:10-17

I Tim. 4:6-16

- What do you see in this mentoring relationship that attracts you?
- What does the depth of feeling expressed by Paul suggest to you about the nature of this mentoring relationship?
- What mentoring qualities do you see in Paul?
- What qualities of a mentoree do you see in Timothy?

Barnabas and Paul

Acts 9:27; 13:1-3

Acts 13-14

Acts 15:36-41

- What do you learn about mentoring from this relationship?
- What would you have most enjoyed had you been part of this relationship?
- How might Barnabas and Paul have responded differently to the conflict between them?

Aquila and Priscilla with Apollos Acts 18:24-26

- What was the impact of Priscilla and Aquila's mentoring of Apollos?

Elizabeth and Mary Luke 1:39-45

- Why did Mary need a mentor?
- What did Elizabeth have to offer as a mentor?
- What was unique about this mentoring relationship?

Older men and women for the younger generation Titus 2:3-7

- What is the focus of the mentoring relationships described here?

Jesus as a Mentor

Matt. 4:18-22; Luke 4:27-32

- What do you notice about the way Jesus initiated mentoring relationships?

Luke 9:1-6; 10:1-12

- How did Jesus mentor as he sent his mentorees on short-term mission assignments?

Luke 9:28-36

- Why do you think Jesus took only three mentorees with him on this occasion?

Matt. 16:21-28

- What mentoring quality does Jesus show in this passage?

John 21:15-19

- What was happening to Peter in this intense encounter with his mentor?

Matt. 20:20-28; Mark 10:35-45; Luke 22:24-30

- How did Jesus use a situation where his mentorees were acting immaturely?

Mark 14:32-42

- What do you notice about the way Jesus mentored at a moment of tremendous crisis?

John 13:1-20

- How many senses (touch, sight, smell, etc.) were involved in this learning experience?
- How did Jesus surprise his mentorees?

Mentoring

Mentoring is a one-to-one relationship in which one person supports, advises, teaches, counsels, challenges, encourages, models, and prays for another so that both persons grow toward God's purpose for their lives and ministries.

Mentor

A mentor is a counselor, guide, teacher, cheerleader, supporter - one who helps another move toward their Personal Purpose, toward the future God intends for them. One who walks with another in his or her journey of life to help discovery and facilitate the mentoree's God-given purpose and goals of life.

Mentoree

A mentoree is the person who receives mentoring. A mentoree is a person determined to grow toward the future God intends for them, toward their Personal Purpose. The mentoree claims God's help, and invites a fellow Christian to support them on this journey of discovery, growth and mission.

One who is willing to receive help from God, and through a mentor, to discover his or her God-given purpose and goals in life.

Why do you need a mentor?

- A mentor helps you clarify your Personal Purpose.
- A mentor helps you set realistic growth goals.
- A mentor helps you sharpen your growth plan.
- A mentor helps you achieve your growth goals.
- A mentor provides a model to follow.
- A mentor is a cheerleader.
- A mentor is a prayer partner.
- A mentor helps you toward heaven.

Qualities of a good mentoree

Motivated - Is goal-oriented, an initiator, self-starter, ready to be stretched

Available - Willing to make a commitment, to sacrifice for the sake of learning

Teachable - Desires to learn and to grow; Receptive to constructive feedback

Accountable - Respects authority; willing to be held accountable

Faithful - Faithful in the face of opposition, criticism, difficulties, conflicts

Responsible - Accepts responsibility for own growth and development
with Personal Purpose and Growth Plan as a compass and map

Qualities of an effective mentor-mentoree relationship

When the mentor:

- Is respected by other Christians.
- Is open and transparent.
- Is consistent in his/her lifestyle.
- Cultivates the relationship.
- Is able to both talk and listen.
- Is concerned with the mentoree's interests.
- Is able to recognize some of the mentoree's needs.
- Seems to have what the mentoree needs.
- Is willing to take a chance on the mentoree.
- Is consulted by others.
- Loves to see another person grow.
- Sees failure as an opportunity for growth.
- Affirms much more often than criticizes.
- Has a network of resources.

(some of this material is adapted from *As Iron Sharpens Iron* by Howard & William Hendricks)

What does a Spiritual Friend/mentoree do?

Prepares for the mentoring session and is ready to share progress, issues, struggles, and concerns.

Provides adequate information for the mentor so that they understand the mentoree's life situation.

Explains choices and decisions and invites the mentor to question and critique, and also to affirm.

Shares successes and failures, inviting the mentor to help evaluate and reflect on learning.

Continues working on Growth Plan, inviting the mentor to clarify, evaluate, challenge, and affirm.

Keeps promises made to mentor.

What does a Spiritual Friend/mentor do?

Is prepared for mentoring session by reviewing notes of past sessions.

Helps mentoree clarify Personal Purpose Statement and Growth Plan.

Prays regularly for mentoree.

Provides spiritual guidance: helps mentoree grow in the practice of the spiritual disciplines.

Listens attentively to the thoughts, feelings, ideas and unspoken words. Listens actively, “between the lines.”

Nurtures curiosity by sharing relevant and eye-opening information; helps mentoree expand horizons; see new opportunities; examine the alternatives.

Helps mentoree achieve Growth Plan goals and to move toward Personal Purpose.

Serves as a sounding board: provides opportunities to test ideas and intuitions before they become agenda and attitudes.

Affirms, encourages and supports: celebrates progress; brings out the best through encouraging the heart – Celebrate! Celebrate! Celebrate every milestone of growth.

Promotes positive attitudes and behavior: Challenges or confronts negative attitudes and behavior with loving and constructive feedback.

Formal Mentoring Relationship

A formal mentoring relationship begins when a person develops a Personal Purpose Statement and Growth Plan and invites a mentor to encourage and support that journey of intentional learning as enabled by the Holy Spirit.

What is the purpose of the relationship?	Mentoree and mentor clarify goals and expectations for the mentoring relationship.
How often and how long will you meet?	Be clear about how often you'll meet, and approximately how long those meetings will be.
What will you talk about? What won't you talk about?	Talk about what is allowed and what is out of bounds. When in doubt, do not assume but ask questions. When something does not happen as expected, first suspect a breakdown in communication.
What about confidentiality?	Be clear what confidentiality means in your relationship. Talk about what you do/don't share with spouses. Guard the trust you build with great care.
How long will this relationship continue?	Begin with one year. Then evaluate and decide whether to continue. Avoid open-ended mentoring relationships.
Mentoring agreement	A mentoring relationship cannot be assumed. It is intentional and both persons must be clear about expectations. You are encouraged to work through and sign a mentoring agreement.
Review and evaluate	Mentoring relationship and agreement should be reviewed and updated annually. The Growth Plan should also be updated annually.
Modify expectations to fit the real-life mentoring situation	Initial purposes and expectations are usually higher than can be met. Modify expectations based on experience, evaluation and feedback.
Allow for no-fault termination	If the mentoring relationship is viewed as no longer helpful by either party, that person may ask for closure, which will be done graciously and positively.
Bring closure to mentoring relationship	After a year, or when the mentoring relationship is ending, schedule a closure time. Provide opportunity for mutual review, celebration and prayer. Be open to the possibility of a renewal of the mentoring relationship at some other time. Affirm openness to one another in a continuing friendship, and talk about any aspect of your continuing relationship that might be awkward for either of you.

For a formal arrangement, use the Mentoring Agreement below the Homework block to formalize the relationship between mentor and mentoree. Fill in the blanks and then sign and date the form.

Homework for Session Eight

1. If you have not completed your Growth Plan, do so.
2. Complete Mentoring Agreement if you are entering into a formal arrangement at the end of this chapter. If you plan a simpler Spiritual Friendship, arrange a meeting schedule. Meet at least monthly, more often if schedules permit. Talk with your mentor/spiritual friend about a first meeting date and time.
3. [Optional] You and your mentor complete self-reflection worksheets at the end of this chapter.
4. Schedule mentors for mentor training if it is being offered.
5. Begin to work your plan. Maintain devotions/rule of life you established daily. If it is not working for you, prayerfully, and with help from Spiritual Friend, make adjustment to make it work. It is your rule and your plan.

Mentoring Agreement

between _____ and _____
mentoree mentor

Purpose

We are committing to a mentoring relationship centered on the mentoree's Life Purpose Statement and Growth Plan. We want this relationship to help the mentoree to carry out their Growth Plan and to move toward the realization of their Life Purpose. We are claiming the presence of the Spirit in our relationship, and are committed to being open with God and each other.

Values

- ❖ Honesty: We will speak the truth in love.
- ❖ Confidentiality: We will not share sensitive material from this relationship without permission.
- ❖ Vulnerability: We will share openly with each other.
- ❖ Punctuality: We will be on time, informing the other of unavoidable delays.
- ❖ Preparedness: We will seek to complete assignments and be prepared for each mentoring appointment.
- ❖ Prayer: We will pray regularly for each other.

Features

- Duration of our relationship:
- How frequently will we meet?
- When will we review our relationship?
- Specific objectives

We agree to a no-fault conclusion of this relationship, if, for any reason, it seems appropriate.

Mentoree

Mentoree's Spouse (if applicable)

Mentor

Mentoree's Pastor

Date

My Qualifications as a Mentoree

Worksheet for self-reflection

<u>As a Mentoree I am able to:</u>	low					high	
Make goals	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Seek responsibility and challenges	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Be stretched	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Initiate things	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Learn new things	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Assume responsibility for own growth/development	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Qualities of a mentoree:

Availability	Willing to make a commitment, to sacrifice	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Teachable	Desires to learn and to grow Receptive to constructive feedback	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Accountable	Respects authority; willing to be held accountable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Faithful	Faithful in the face of opposition, criticism, difficulties, conflicts	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Responsible	Accepts responsibility for own growth and development with Personal Purpose and Growth Plan as a compass and map	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

My Qualifications as a Mentor

Worksheet for self-reflection

<u>As a Mentor I am able to:</u>	low					high	
Listen deeply and patiently to another	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Clearly express my convictions and concerns as needed	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Discern when to speak and when not to speak	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Establish positive relationships	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Walk with another in times that are difficult as well as good	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
See and affirm strengths in another person	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Provide helpful critique and correction as needed	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Work with mistakes as a means of growth	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Encourage growth in the other person	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Be appropriately transparent when it is helpful	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Give adequate time to the mentoring relationship	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Pray regularly for the mentoree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Appendix

Spiritual Gifts Experience Assessment	181
Observation Assessments 1-3	190
Observer Summary Sheet	199
Spiritual Gifts Summary	201
Discovery Evaluation Form	203

Spiritual Gifts Experience Assessment

Prior to Session 2 class, take the Spiritual Gifts Experience Assessment below. These pages are reproduced from the *Network* book, which you purchased. We provide a copy here to use as your working copy for the assessment without having to cut pages out of your book. Record your responses on the Spiritual Gifts answer key. Then provide your three Observers each with a copy of Observation Assessment.

See page 53 in *Network* book.

Use the following chart on the next page to score the assessment:

Score	Meaning
3	consistently/definitely true
2	most of the time/usually true
1	some of the time/once in a while
0	never/not at all

54																																	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19															
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38															
39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57															
58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76															
77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95															
96	97	98	99	100	101	102	103	104	105	106	107	108	109	110	111	112	113	114															
115	116	117	118	119	120	121	122	123	124	125	126	127	128	129	130	131	132	133	134	135	136	137											
TOTAL																																	
TOP GIFTS		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W									

INDICATE TOP 3 GIFTS: 1, 2, 3

SPIRITUAL GIFTS EXPERIENCE ASSESSMENT

1. I can coordinate people, tasks, and events to meet a need.
2. I enjoy working creatively with wood, cloth, paints, metal, glass, or other materials.
3. I enjoy developing and using my artistic skills (art, drama, music, photography, etc.).
4. When I see spiritual complacency, I am willing to challenge it.
5. I have confidence that God not only can, but he will.
6. I give liberally and joyfully to people in financial need or to projects requiring support.
7. I enjoy working behind the scenes to support the work of others.
8. I view my home as a safe and caring place to minister to people.
9. When it comes to my attention, I am honored to regularly pray for someone or for a concern.
10. I am motivated to set goals and influence others to achieve a vision in order to advance God's work on earth.
11. I empathize with hurting people and desire to help in their healing process.
12. I am attracted to the idea of serving in another country or an ethnic community.
13. I have spoken a timely and important prophetic word to others that I felt came to me directly from God while in prayer.
14. I have the ability to communicate the gospel with clarity and conviction.
15. I establish trust and confidence through long-term relationships.
16. I am able to communicate God's Word effectively.
17. I can readily distinguish between spiritual truth and error, good and evil.

SESSION 2

NETWORK PARTICIPANT'S GUIDE

18. I research and am persistent in my pursuit of knowing the truth.
19. Others often seek me out for advice about personal and spiritual matters.
20. I am careful, thorough, and skilled at managing details.
21. I am skilled in working with different kinds of tools.
22. I help people better understand themselves, their relationships, and God through artistic expression.
23. I enjoy reassuring and strengthening those who are discouraged.
24. I have confidence in God's continuing provision and help, even in difficult times.
25. I give more than a tithe so that kingdom work can be accomplished.
26. I enjoy doing routine tasks that support the needs of ministry.
27. I enjoy meeting new people and helping them feel welcomed.
28. I enjoy praying for long periods of time and receive leadings as to what God wants me to pray for.
29. It is quite natural for me to lead, and it is more comfortable for me to lead than not to lead.
30. I can patiently support those going through painful experiences as they are seeking stability in their lives.
31. I am willing to take an active part in starting a new church.
32. By God's revelation to me, I have been able to shed light on current realities in someone's life that helps them see God's desire for their future.
33. After I have shared the story of Jesus, people pray with me for salvation.
34. I can faithfully provide long-term emotional and spiritual support and concern for others.
35. I simply and practically explain and clarify the Word for those who are confused or just do not know.
36. I have a "sixth sense" and frequently am able to identify a person's character based on first impressions.
37. I receive information from the Spirit that I did not acquire through natural means.
38. I can often find simple, practical solutions in the midst of conflict or confusion.
39. I can clarify goals and develop strategies or plans to accomplish them.
40. I can visualize how something should be constructed before I build it.
41. I like finding new and fresh ways of communicating God's truth.
42. I give hope to others by directing them to the promises of God.
43. I have a special ability to trust God for extraordinary needs.
44. I manage my money well in order to free more of it for giving.
45. I willingly take on a variety of odd jobs around the church to meet the needs of others.
46. I genuinely believe the Lord directs strangers to me who need a sense of belonging and connection to others.
47. I am conscious of ministering to others as I pray.
48. I am usually chosen as the group's spokesperson when in discussion groups.
49. I am drawn toward people who are sometimes regarded as undeserving or beyond help.
50. I can relate to others in culturally sensitive ways.
51. I speak biblical truth in a timely and culturally sensitive way in order to strengthen, encourage, and comfort God's people.

SESSION 2

52. I'd rather be around non-Christians more than Christians so that I can build relationships with them.
53. I enjoy giving practical support, nurture, and spiritual guidance to a group of people.
54. When I teach, people respond to my teaching with action.
55. I can see through phoniness or deceit before it is evident to others.
56. I seek certainty and truth in order to avoid superficial understandings and speculation.
57. I am surprised by how many people are unable to solve problems and seem to lack common sense.
58. I can identify and effectively use the resources needed to accomplish tasks.
59. I am good at working with my hands and enjoy doing so.
60. I regularly need to get alone to reflect and to develop my imagination.
61. I reassure those who need to take courageous action in their faith, family, or life.
62. I am unwavering in my belief that God will absolutely work in circumstances in which success cannot be guaranteed by human effort alone.
63. I choose to limit my lifestyle in order to give away a higher percentage of my income.
64. I see spiritual significance in doing practical tasks.
65. I rarely meet people I do not like and wouldn't want to see included in the life of the church.
66. I pray with confidence because I know that God works in response to prayer.
67. I set goals and direct people to effectively accomplish them.
68. I have great compassion for hurting people.

NETWORK PARTICIPANT'S GUIDE

69. I view the overall picture and do not get hindered with problems along the way.
70. I have spoken to others about future events or situations that God revealed to me, and they happened as I said they would.
71. I boldly speak about salvation through Jesus Christ and see a positive response in those who are listening.
72. I can gently restore wandering believers to faith and fellowship.
73. I get frustrated when I see people's lack of biblical knowledge.
74. God shows me the difference between a demonic influence, a mental illness, and an error in truth.
75. When reading or studying Scripture, I see important biblical truths and themes that benefit others in the body of Christ.
76. I can anticipate the likely consequences of the actions of an individual or a group.
77. I like to help groups become more efficient.
78. I serve and work more behind the scenes to make things that are useful for ministry and that honor God.
79. The way I say and do things awakens the truth in others, so they say, "I have never thought of it that way."
80. I find great joy in affirming the value and worth of others.
81. When I see God's activity, I move toward it in spite of opposition or a lack of support.
82. For special projects and capital campaigns, I like to give in a way that encourages and inspires others to give generously.
83. I like to find things that need to be done and often do them without being asked.
84. For me, the greatest times of joy in the church are times of social interaction and fellowship.
85. When I hear about needy situations, I feel burdened to pray.

86. I influence others to perform to the best of their ability.
87. I look through a person's handicaps or problems to see a life that matters to God and an opportunity to serve.
88. I am culturally sensitive and comfortable with different ethnic groups.
89. I feel a compulsion to speak the words God gives me to strengthen, encourage, and comfort others.
90. I openly tell people that I am a Christian and want them to ask me about my faith.
91. There are a number of people in my life that I am personally guiding with truth, encouragement, caring, and wisdom.
92. I communicate Scripture in ways that cause others to learn and become motivated toward greater growth.
93. I receive affirmation from others concerning the reliability of my insights about them and of perceptions I have of others.
94. I have suddenly known things about others, but did not know how I knew them.
95. I give practical advice to help others through complicated situations.
96. I can visualize a coming event, anticipate potential problems, and develop strategies to meet them.
97. I am a resourceful person, able to find the best materials and tools required to build what is needed.
98. I use various forms of the arts to draw people closer to God and to his truth.
99. I like motivating others to take steps for spiritual growth.
100. I am regularly challenging others to trust God.
101. I manage my money and give to ministries that are well led and are making a difference for Christ in the lives of people.
102. I show my love for others in actions more than words.
103. I do whatever I can to make visitors and others feel they belong.
104. God gives me a peace and confidence that my prayers are being answered, even when I cannot see the results.
105. I am able to cast a vision for ministry that others want to follow and be a part of.
106. I enjoy bringing hope, joy, and comfort to people working through a crisis or chronic situation in their lives.
107. I relate to leaders who often follow me into new ministry ventures.
108. God reveals to me things others cannot see so when I speak to them they can understand his activity in their lives.
109. I love unchurched people no matter where they are on their spiritual journey.
110. I take responsibility to nurture the whole person in his or her walk with God.
111. I can present information and skills to others in ways that make it easier for them to grasp and apply them to their lives.
112. I have seen into the spiritual realm where spirits have been revealed to me by God.
113. The truths I learn and the understandings I gain create a burden for me because of the responsibility I feel to handle the information wisely.
114. When faced with how to apply biblical truths practically in a difficult or complex situation, God reveals to me a solution.
115. I want to bring order where there is organizational chaos.
116. I have good hand-eye coordination and good dexterity.
117. I have a sense of the whole and can creatively put things together in a harmonious flow that artistically communicates a biblical truth.

SESSION 2

118. I carefully challenge or rebuke others in order to help them grow spiritually.
119. I find it natural to believe in God for things that others see as impossible.
120. I believe I have been given an abundance of resources so that I may give more to the Lord's work.
121. When a task needs to be done, I find it difficult to say no.
122. I can make people feel at ease even in unfamiliar surroundings.
123. I see specific results in direct response to my prayers.
124. I figure out where we need to go and help others to get there.
125. I am moved with compassion and motivated to remove the sources of another's sufferings.
126. God's authority and power are manifested in the new churches and ministries I served to start.
127. I feel compelled to expose sin wherever I see it and to challenge people to repentance.
128. I'm constantly thinking of ways to bring up spiritual matters with friends who do not know God.
129. I feel responsible to help oversee and protect believers from the things that keep them from fellowship with God and one another.
130. I struggle with how to take what I have been studying and communicate only those things that will help God's people learn what they need at the moment.
131. I can sense when demonic forces are at work in a person or situation.
132. I love learning and share with those who want to learn.
133. I like to read and study the book of Proverbs for its simple and powerful truths expressed in a clear and practical way.

NETWORK PARTICIPANT'S GUIDE

If you have repeatedly had any of the following experiences, simply place a check mark in the appropriate box on the answer sheet.

134. I have repeatedly seen an instant healing as I laid hands on someone and prayed.
135. When I hear people speak in tongues, I feel the Spirit revealing his message to me, and I speak it aloud, interpreting it for the church.
136. I have experienced the power of God within me to cast out demons and heal the sick, and I see his supernatural intervention in nature.
137. I have spoken in a language I do not understand, and someone has spoken out to interpret what I had just said.

SESSION 2

**EXPERIENCE ASSESSMENT
KEY**

A	Administration
B	Craftsmanship
C	Creative Communication
D	Encouragement
E	Faith
F	Giving
G	Helps
H	Hospitality
I	Intercession
J	Leadership
K	Mercy
L	Apostleship
M	Prophecy
N	Evangelism
O	Shepherding
P	Teaching
Q	Discernment
R	Word of Knowledge
S	Word of Wisdom
T	Healing
U	Interpretation
V	Miracles
W	Tongues
Other	

Spiritual Gifts Discovery

I'd like your opinion!

I am seeking to better understand how God has equipped me to serve others. One part of the process involves getting feedback from a few people who know me reasonably well. Your thoughts about what I do best and the way I relate to others will be very helpful. Please take a few minutes to complete this assessment.

My name is: _____

These are my observations of: _____

Directions:

1. Please read the descriptions below.
2. Mark each one according to how true it is of the person you are describing.
3. Place your score to each statement in the appropriately numbered box on the answer sheet on pages 2-5. Respond by using the following scale:

SCORE	MEANING
3	= Consistently/Definitely True
2	= Most of the Time/Usually True
1	= Some of the Time/Once in a While
0	= Don't Know/Haven't Observed

SPIRITUAL GIFTS DISCOVERY

IMPORTANT:

- Answer according to what seems to be true of them most of the time ... not what you would like them to be, or think they should be.
- To what degree do these statements reflect their tendencies?
- Return the assessment as soon as you have completed it. Thanks!

Observation Assessment #1

	Consistently- Definitely True	Most of the Time- Usually True	Some of the Time- Once in a While	Don't Know- Haven't Observed
A	3	2	1	0
Develops strategies or plans to reach identified goals; organizes people, tasks, and events; helps organizations or groups become more efficient; creates order out of organizational chaos.				
B	3	2	1	0
Works creatively with wood, cloth, metal, paints, glass, etc.; works with different kinds of tools; makes things for practical uses; designs and builds things; works with his or her hands.				
C	3	2	1	0
Communicates with variety and creativity; develops and uses particular artistic skills (art, drama, music, photography, etc.); finds new and fresh ways to communicate ideas to others.				
D	3	2	1	0
Strengthens and reassures troubled people; encourages or challenges them; motivates others to grow; supports those who seem to be stuck and need to take action.				
E	3	2	1	0
Trusts God to answer prayer and encourages others to do the same; has confidence in God's continuing presence and ability to help, even in difficult times; moves forward in spite of difficulties or opposition.				

NETWORK PARTICIPANT'S GUIDE

Observation Assessment #1

	Consistently- Definitely True	Most of the Time- Usually True	Some of the Time- Once in a While	Don't Know- Haven't Observed
F	3	2	1	0
Gives liberally and joyfully to people in financial need; gives generously to projects requiring substantial support; manages his or her money well in order to free more of it for other people and causes.				
G	3	2	1	0
Works behind the scenes to support the work of others; finds small things that need to be done and does them without being asked; helps wherever needed, even with routine or mundane tasks.				
H	3	2	1	0
Meets new people and helps them to feel welcome; entertains guests; opens his or her home to others who need a safe, supportive environment; puts people at ease in unfamiliar surroundings.				
I	3	2	1	0
Continually offers to pray for others; has confidence in the Lord's protection; spends a lot of time praying; is convinced that God moves in direct response to prayer.				
J	3	2	1	0
Takes responsibility for directing groups; motivates and guides others to reach important goals; manages people and resources well; influences others to perform to the best of their abilities.				
K	3	2	1	0
Empathizes with hurting people; patiently and compassionately walks with people through painful experiences; helps those generally regarded as undeserving or beyond help.				
L	3	2	1	0
Pioneers new undertakings (such as a new church or ministry); serves in another country or community; adapts to different cultures and surroundings; demonstrates cultural awareness and sensitivity.				
M	3	2	1	0
Speaks with conviction to bring change in the lives of others; exposes cultural trends, teaching, or events that are morally wrong or harmful; boldly speaks truth even in places where it may be unpopular.				

SPIRITUAL GIFTS DISCOVERY

Observation Assessment #1

	Consistently- Definitely True	Most of the Time- Usually True	Some of the Time- Once in a While	Don't Know- Haven't Observed
N	3	2	1	0
Looks for opportunities to build relationships with unbelievers; communicates openly and effectively about his or her faith; talks about spiritual matters with those who don't believe.				
O	3	2	1	0
Faithfully provides long-term support and nurture for a group of people; provides guidance for the whole person; patiently but firmly nurtures others in their development as believers.				
P	3	2	1	0
Studies, understands, and communicates biblical truth; develops appropriate teaching material and presents it effectively; communicates in ways that motivate others to change.				
Q	3	2	1	0
Distinguishes between truth and error, good and evil; accurately judges character; sees through phoniness and deceit; helps others to see rightness or wrongness in life situations.				
R	3	2	1	0
Carefully studies and researches subjects he or she wants to understand better; shares his or her knowledge and insights with others when asked; sometimes gains information that is not attained by natural observation or means.				
S	3	2	1	0
Sees simple, practical solutions in the midst of conflict or confusion; gives helpful advice to others facing complicated life situations; helps people take practical action to solve real problems.				
T	3	2	1	0
Demonstrates the power of God by bringing restoration to the sick and diseased by laying hands on them and praying; miraculously heals a person's body, soul or spirit.				
U	3	2	1	0
Communicates God's message to others when someone speaks in tongues; responds to people who have spoken in a different and unknown language and tells the group what God is saying.				

4

NETWORK PARTICIPANT'S GUIDE

Observation Assessment #1

	Consistently- Definitely True	Most of the Time- Usually True	Some of the Time- Once in a While	Don't Know- Haven't Observed
V	3	2	1	0
Speaks God's truth and has it authenticated by an accompanying miracle; communicates the ministry and message of Jesus Christ with demonstrations of power over nature and claims God to be the source of the miracle.				
W	3	2	1	0
Speaks in a language I do not understand, and when she or he does, someone speaks out to interpret what they just said; worships God and seems to spontaneously pray using words I have not heard before.				

Here are a few additional questions:

1. Go back over those you marked with a "3" (Consistently/Definitely True) and in the shaded column, indicate your top choice with a 1, second with a 2, and third with a 3. Then write the "letter" of those top three in the space provided to the right.	Top Three Letters 1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____
2. If you are familiar with Spiritual Gifts, which one(s) have you seen most in this person's life?	1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____
3. Are there any other observations or insights you have that would help this person better understand what they do best?	Comments

Thank you for taking the time to complete this assessment. Your opinions and observations are valuable to me. I appreciate your help!

5

SPIRITUAL GIFTS DISCOVERY

IMPORTANT:

- Answer according to what seems to be true of them most of the time ... not what you would like them to be, or think they should be.
- To what degree do these statements reflect their tendencies?
- Return the assessment as soon as you have completed it. Thanks!

Observation Assessment #2

	Consistently- Definitely True	Most of the Time- Usually True	Some of the Time- Once in a While	Don't Know- Haven't Observed
A	3	2	1	0
Develops strategies or plans to reach identified goals; organizes people, tasks, and events; helps organizations or groups become more efficient; creates order out of organizational chaos.				
B	3	2	1	0
Works creatively with wood, cloth, metal, paints, glass, etc.; works with different kinds of tools; makes things for practical uses; designs and builds things; works with his or her hands.				
C	3	2	1	0
Communicates with variety and creativity; develops and uses particular artistic skills (art, drama, music, photography, etc.); finds new and fresh ways to communicate ideas to others.				
D	3	2	1	0
Strengthens and reassures troubled people; encourages or challenges them; motivates others to grow; supports those who seem to be stuck and need to take action.				
E	3	2	1	0
Trusts God to answer prayer and encourages others to do the same; has confidence in God's continuing presence and ability to help, even in difficult times; moves forward in spite of difficulties or opposition.				

NETWORK PARTICIPANT'S GUIDE

Observation Assessment #2

	Consistently- Definitely True	Most of the Time- Usually True	Some of the Time- Once in a While	Don't Know- Haven't Observed
F	3	2	1	0
Gives liberally and joyfully to people in financial need; gives generously to projects requiring substantial support; manages his or her money well in order to free more of it for other people and causes.				
G	3	2	1	0
Works behind the scenes to support the work of others; finds small things that need to be done and does them without being asked; helps wherever needed, even with routine or mundane tasks.				
H	3	2	1	0
Meets new people and helps them to feel welcome; entertains guests; opens his or her home to others who need a safe, supportive environment; puts people at ease in unfamiliar surroundings.				
I	3	2	1	0
Continually offers to pray for others; has confidence in the Lord's protection; spends a lot of time praying; is convinced that God moves in direct response to prayer.				
J	3	2	1	0
Takes responsibility for directing groups; motivates and guides others to reach important goals; manages people and resources well; influences others to perform to the best of their abilities.				
K	3	2	1	0
Empathizes with hurting people; patiently and compassionately walks with people through painful experiences; helps those generally regarded as undeserving or beyond help.				
L	3	2	1	0
Pioneers new undertakings (such as a new church or ministry); serves in another country or community; adapts to different cultures and surroundings; demonstrates cultural awareness and sensitivity.				
M	3	2	1	0
Speaks with conviction to bring change in the lives of others; exposes cultural trends, teaching, or events that are morally wrong or harmful; boldly speaks truth even in places where it may be unpopular.				

SPIRITUAL GIFTS DISCOVERY

Observation Assessment #2

		Consistently- Definitely True	Most of the Time- Usually True	Some of the Time- Once in a While	Don't Know- Haven't Observed
N	Looks for opportunities to build relationships with unbelievers; communicates openly and effectively about his or her faith; talks about spiritual matters with those who don't believe.	3	2	1	0
O	Faithfully provides long-term support and nurture for a group of people; provides guidance for the whole person; patiently but firmly nurtures others in their development as believers.	3	2	1	0
P	Studies, understands, and communicates biblical truth; develops appropriate teaching material and presents it effectively; communicates in ways that motivate others to change.	3	2	1	0
Q	Distinguishes between truth and error, good and evil; accurately judges character; sees through phoniness and deceit; helps others to see rightness or wrongness in life situations.	3	2	1	0
R	Carefully studies and researches subjects he or she wants to understand better; shares his or her knowledge and insights with others when asked; sometimes gains information that is not attained by natural observation or means.	3	2	1	0
S	Sees simple, practical solutions in the midst of conflict or confusion; gives helpful advice to others facing complicated life situations; helps people take practical action to solve real problems.	3	2	1	0
T	Demonstrates the power of God by bringing restoration to the sick and diseased by laying hands on them and praying; miraculously heals a person's body, soul or spirit.	3	2	1	0
U	Communicates God's message to others when someone speaks in tongues; responds to people who have spoken in a different and unknown language and tells the group what God is saying.	3	2	1	0

4

NETWORK PARTICIPANT'S GUIDE

Observation Assessment #2

		Consistently- Definitely True	Most of the Time- Usually True	Some of the Time- Once in a While	Don't Know- Haven't Observed
V	Speaks God's truth and has it authenticated by an accompanying miracle; communicates the ministry and message of Jesus Christ with demonstrations of power over nature and claims God to be the source of the miracle.	3	2	1	0
W	Speaks in a language I do not understand, and when she or he does, someone speaks out to interpret what they just said; worships God and seems to spontaneously pray using words I have not heard before.	3	2	1	0

Here are a few additional questions:

	Top Three Letters
1. Go back over those you marked with a "3" (Consistently/Definitely True) and in the shaded column, indicate your top choice with a 1, second with a 2, and third with a 3. Then write the "letter" of those top three in the space provided to the right.	1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____
2. If you are familiar with Spiritual Gifts, which one(s) have you seen most in this person's life?	1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____
3. Are there any other observations or insights you have that would help this person better understand what they do best?	Comments

Thank you for taking the time to complete this assessment. Your opinions and observations are valuable to me. I appreciate your help!

5

Spiritual Gifts Discovery

I'd like your opinion!

I am seeking to better understand how God has equipped me to serve others. One part of the process involves getting feedback from a few people who know me reasonably well. Your thoughts about what I do best and the way I relate to others will be very helpful. Please take a few minutes to complete this assessment.

My name is: _____

These are my observations of: _____

Directions:

1. Please read the descriptions below.
2. Mark each one according to how true it is of the person you are describing.
3. Place your score to each statement in the appropriately numbered box on the answer sheet on pages 2-5. Respond by using the following scale:

SCORE	MEANING
3	= Consistently/Definitely True
2	= Most of the Time/Usually True
1	= Some of the Time/Once in a While
0	= Don't Know/Haven't Observed

SPIRITUAL GIFTS DISCOVERY

IMPORTANT:

- Answer according to what seems to be true of them most of the time . . . not what you would like them to be, or think they should be.
- To what degree do these statements reflect their tendencies?
- Return the assessment as soon as you have completed it. Thanks!

Observation Assessment #3

		Consistently- Definitely True	Most of the Time- Usually True	Some of the Time- Once in a While	Don't Know- Haven't Observed
A	Develops strategies or plans to reach identified goals; organizes people, tasks, and events; helps organizations or groups become more efficient; creates order out of organizational chaos.	3	2	1	0
B	Works creatively with wood, cloth, metal, paints, glass, etc.; works with different kinds of tools; makes things for practical uses; designs and builds things; works with his or her hands.	3	2	1	0
C	Communicates with variety and creativity; develops and uses particular artistic skills (art, drama, music, photography, etc.); finds new and fresh ways to communicate ideas to others.	3	2	1	0
D	Strengthens and reassures troubled people; encourages or challenges them; motivates others to grow; supports those who seem to be stuck and need to take action.	3	2	1	0
E	Trusts God to answer prayer and encourages others to do the same; has confidence in God's continuing presence and ability to help, even in difficult times; moves forward in spite of difficulties or opposition.	3	2	1	0

NETWORK PARTICIPANT'S GUIDE

Observation Assessment #3

		Consistently- Definitely True	Most of the Time- Usually True	Some of the Time- Once in a While	Don't Know- Haven't Observed
F	Gives liberally and joyfully to people in financial need; gives generously to projects requiring substantial support; manages his or her money well in order to free more of it for other people and causes.	3	2	1	0
G	Works behind the scenes to support the work of others; finds small things that need to be done and does them without being asked; helps wherever needed, even with routine or mundane tasks.	3	2	1	0
H	Meets new people and helps them to feel welcome; entertains guests; opens his or her home to others who need a safe, supportive environment; puts people at ease in unfamiliar surroundings.	3	2	1	0
I	Continually offers to pray for others; has confidence in the Lord's protection; spends a lot of time praying; is convinced that God moves in direct response to prayer.	3	2	1	0
J	Takes responsibility for directing groups; motivates and guides others to reach important goals; manages people and resources well; influences others to perform to the best of their abilities.	3	2	1	0
K	Empathizes with hurting people; patiently and compassionately walks with people through painful experiences; helps those generally regarded as undeserving or beyond help.	3	2	1	0
L	Pioneers new undertakings (such as a new church or ministry); serves in another country or community; adapts to different cultures and surroundings; demonstrates cultural awareness and sensitivity.	3	2	1	0
M	Speaks with conviction to bring change in the lives of others; exposes cultural trends, teaching, or events that are morally wrong or harmful; boldly speaks truth even in places where it may be unpopular.	3	2	1	0

SPIRITUAL GIFTS DISCOVERY

Observation Assessment #2

		Consistently- Definitely True	Most of the Time- Usually True	Some of the Time- Once in a While	Don't Know- Haven't Observed
N	Looks for opportunities to build relationships with unbelievers; communicates openly and effectively about his or her faith; talks about spiritual matters with those who don't believe.	3	2	1	0
O	Faithfully provides long-term support and nurture for a group of people; provides guidance for the whole person; patiently but firmly nurtures others in their development as believers.	3	2	1	0
P	Studies, understands, and communicates biblical truth; develops appropriate teaching material and presents it effectively; communicates in ways that motivate others to change.	3	2	1	0
Q	Distinguishes between truth and error, good and evil; accurately judges character; sees through phoniness and deceit; helps others to see rightness or wrongness in life situations.	3	2	1	0
R	Carefully studies and researches subjects he or she wants to understand better; shares his or her knowledge and insights with others when asked; sometimes gains information that is not attained by natural observation or means.	3	2	1	0
S	Sees simple, practical solutions in the midst of conflict or confusion; gives helpful advice to others facing complicated life situations; helps people take practical action to solve real problems.	3	2	1	0
T	Demonstrates the power of God by bringing restoration to the sick and diseased by laying hands on them and praying; miraculously heals a person's body, soul or spirit.	3	2	1	0
U	Communicates God's message to others when someone speaks in tongues; responds to people who have spoken in a different and unknown language and tells the group what God is saying.	3	2	1	0

4

NETWORK PARTICIPANT'S GUIDE

Observation Assessment #2

		Consistently- Definitely True	Most of the Time- Usually True	Some of the Time- Once in a While	Don't Know- Haven't Observed
V	Speaks God's truth and has it authenticated by an accompanying miracle; communicates the ministry and message of Jesus Christ with demonstrations of power over nature and claims God to be the source of the miracle.	3	2	1	0
W	Speaks in a language I do not understand, and when she or he does, someone speaks out to interpret what they just said; worships God and seems to spontaneously pray using words I have not heard before.	3	2	1	0

Here are a few additional questions:

	Top Three Letters
1. Go back over those you marked with a "3" (Consistently/Definitely True) and in the shaded column, indicate your top choice with a 1, second with a 2, and third with a 3. Then write the "letter" of those top three in the space provided to the right.	1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____
2. If you are familiar with Spiritual Gifts, which one(s) have you seen most in this person's life?	1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____
3. Are there any other observations or insights you have that would help this person better understand what they do best?	Comments

Thank you for taking the time to complete this assessment. Your opinions and observations are valuable to me. I appreciate your help!

5

OBSERVATION ASSESSMENT

Spiritual Gifts Discovery

1. In chart below, put an "X" in the box by each of the top three Spiritual Gifts identified in each of your *Observation Assessments*.

	SPIRITUAL GIFT	OBSERVER 1	OBSERVER 2	OBSERVER 3	TOTAL	TOP GIFTS
A	Administration					
B	Craftsmanship					
C	Creative Comm.					
D	Encouragement					
E	Faith					
F	Giving					
G	Helps					
H	Hospitality					
I	Intercession					
J	Leadership					
K	Mercy					
L	Apostleship					
M	Prophecy					
N	Evangelism					
O	Shepherding					
P	Teaching					
Q	Discernment					
R	Knowledge					
S	Wisdom					
T	Healing					
U	Interpretation					
V	Miracles					
W	Tongues					

Remember, their perceptions will be affected by how long they have known you and the type of relationship they have with you (family, small group, work, neighborhood, ministry, etc.). Weigh these factors as you record and evaluate their responses. Give more weight to those who have seen you in ministry.

2. Add across the row to total each Spiritual Gift.
3. In the shaded column to the right, put a 1, 2, or 3 next to the three Spiritual Gifts identified with the highest total.
4. Transfer these top three Gifts to the Spiritual Gifts Summary on page 68.

SPIRITUAL GIFTS SUMMARY

Spiritual Gifts Discovery

Use this page to compile the results of your *Experience Assessment* and *Observation Assessments*.

EXPERIENCE ASSESSMENT	OBSERVATION ASSESSMENTS
What are the top Spiritual Gifts you identified on your <i>Experience Assessment</i> ? (from page 54)	What Spiritual Gifts were most observed by those who know you well? (from page 66)
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Now ... combine the results from both assessments into a list of what you think at this time are your top three, or primary, Spiritual Gifts.

MY SPIRITUAL GIFTS	CONTRIBUTES (from page 44-51)
1. _____	_____
2. _____	_____
3. _____	_____

Evaluation of Discovery

Please evaluate your experience after each session.

Helpfulness of the Discovery Materials:

Low

High

1. Session 1/What is Discovery?

Relevance of materials

1 2 3 4 5

Quality of instruction

1 2 3 4 5

Comments:

2. Session 2/You are a Gifted Child of God

Relevance of materials

1 2 3 4 5

Quality of instruction

1 2 3 4 5

Comments:

3. Session 3/What is Your Passion? Your Emotional IQ?

Relevance of materials

1 2 3 4 5

Quality of instruction

1 2 3 4 5

Comments:

4. Session 4/Discovering Your Uniqueness

Relevance of materials

1 2 3 4 5

Quality of instruction

1 2 3 4 5

Comments:

5. Session 5/My Deep Gladness, The World's Deep Hunger

Relevance of materials

1 2 3 4 5

Quality of instruction

1 2 3 4 5

Comments:

(CONTINUED ON BACK)

6. Session 6/Putting it all Together

Relevance of materials	1	2	3	4	5
-------------------------------	----------	----------	----------	----------	----------

Quality of instruction	1	2	3	4	5
-------------------------------	----------	----------	----------	----------	----------

Comments:

7. Session 7/Developing a Growth Plan

Relevance of materials	1	2	3	4	5
-------------------------------	----------	----------	----------	----------	----------

Quality of instruction	1	2	3	4	5
-------------------------------	----------	----------	----------	----------	----------

Comments:

8. Session 8/Transforming Friendship

Relevance of materials	1	2	3	4	5
-------------------------------	----------	----------	----------	----------	----------

Quality of instruction	1	2	3	4	5
-------------------------------	----------	----------	----------	----------	----------

Comments:

❖ **What about Discovery was most helpful to you?**

❖ **What was least helpful?**

❖ **How could we improve Discovery?**

❖ **Other comments:**