



**Strategies for Life Coaching
Leader's Guide**



Strategies

Bold Life Coaching for Maximum Life Change

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Welcome to Strategies for Life Coaching!

Our goal: To equip followers of Christ who will propel others into deeper relationship with Jesus Christ.

We pray: That God would so fill you with desire for and delight in him that his joy will spill over into every area of your life.

Prepare: Please prepare your heart and your schedule to immerse yourself completely into this experience. Expect God to change you and others around you!

Pre-work: Please complete the pre-work on the following pages prior to the first *Strategies for Life Coaching* session.

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Strategies

Preface

What are the Strategies for Life Coaching?

The *Strategies for Life Coaching* are relational skills that equip followers of Jesus in propelling others forward in their relationship with God. The *Strategies* are biblical, relational, transferable disciple-making skills.

Goal

The goal of *Strategies for Life Coaching* is a deeper relationship with God that results in life change—life change in you and in others whom you lead and influence.

Cultivate an environment for life change

We desire to cultivate an environment in which life change can sprout and flourish. These guidelines are *not* a formula guaranteeing life change! Life change is God's work. But we can hinder God's work by getting in the way when we advance our own agendas, harbor sinful patterns, or carry excess religious baggage. To advance rather than hinder God's work, we want to join him in his work by following Christlike patterns. These patterns will honor God because they are consistent with his character and they exhibit the life they proclaim. These patterns apply to virtually any setting in which we seek to impact others for Christ.

Keep three primary goals before you as you lead *Strategies*:

- Continue to grow in and model your relationship with Christ before others!
- Cultivate authentic relationships with each other!
- Expect God to change you and others!

Continue to grow and model your relationship with Christ before others!

- Display for others what enjoying God looks like by finding total satisfaction in him. Boast to others how great and loving and awesome God is!
- Admit to God and in the presence of others often that you are utterly needy and totally dependent on him.
- Model an abiding life with Christ before others and lead them to *expect* and *anticipate* God to work in and through them.
- Worship God in all you do. Seek to worship God and help stimulate others to worship him every time you come together.
- Practice and model the *Strategies* so the participants observe them in action.

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Cultivate authentic relationships with each other!

- Be transparent, honest and real in sharing your own struggles and victories and so encourage others to do the same. Pepper the training with your personal stories of life change.
- Encourage the participants to share with each other each week what God is doing in their lives.
- Celebrate each other's personal victories. Draw attention to what God is doing.
- Love and care for one another and go to God in prayer with each other frequently.
- Pray for people immediately, on-the-spot when they request prayer. Place a hand on their shoulder or have others do so to lock hearts with them.
- Challenge each other boldly in God's truth.
- When you pray as a group, do so conversationally using short, sentence prayers.

Expect God to change you and others!

- Encourage all to be purposeful in working the projects, interacting with each other and expecting God to change us.
- Promote values instead of rules and outward appearances. Guard against chasing rabbit trails and meaningless arguments.
- Pursue an atmosphere of holy expectation that God is here at work in our lives and some great and significant things are about to happen!
- Listen to the Holy Spirit's promptings and obey him.
- Prepare your heart for what God wants to do through you by spending time with him alone each day.
- Ask God for specific milestones in your life and in the lives of others.

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Start each session right!

Begin each *Strategies* session practicing and modeling three habits:

1. Pray, unleashing a vision of God for the participants. Pray expecting God to work.
2. Ask the group: What is God doing in your life? (Press them to share and create a safe, loving environment in which to do so. When needed, “prime the pump” by sharing what God is doing in your life. Celebrate their personal victories and glorify God together for what he is doing among you. Pray on the spot for people who need prayer. Always look for opportunities during the sharing time to model the *Strategies*.)
3. Review the *Strategies* and *Actions*, providing participants with the context for the whole. Use variety and creativity in doing this. Reinforce *Strategies* or *Actions* where you see a need to do so.

Additional tips and best practices

- The *Strategies for Life Coaching* are primarily *skills* and not a body of knowledge to master. For this reason, the facilitator must model the *Strategies* and allow sufficient time for practice via role-plays and simulations.
- Allow about two hours for each session—the first hour for training and the second hour for small group practice and discussion. If you find yourself running out of time, cut the training or teaching time rather than the practice.
- Since 2004, we have trained about 800 life coaches in at least five churches. We have experimented with numerous size groups, lengths of time and a host of other variables. Here are some of the best practices we have discovered:
 - The notion that discipleship best takes place one-on-one is neither true nor the biblical pattern. The synergy and energy of Christ changing lives in a larger group is often far more effective than meeting one-on-one with someone. (We’re not suggesting that you should not meet one-on-one for discipleship! Simply recognize and embrace the power of discipling larger groups. Jesus had his 12 and even a larger group of 72.)
 - The optimum number of participants for running *Strategies for Life Coaching* most effectively seems to be between 12 and 48.
 - The way you arrange seating for your participants is vital! We typically employ pods or tables around which a small group of four to six can sit and interact with each other easily. Classroom style seating (rows) will kill participation and greatly inhibit interaction between participants.

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- We strongly recommend that these small groups (table groups) be gender specific. Normally, life coaches should be coaching men with men and women with women. Many of the role-plays and simulations are not appropriate for mixed gender groups.
- When possible, engage life coaches (who have completed *Strategies*) as table leaders. Although you won't be able to follow this practice initially, we have found that these life coach table leaders can be extremely effective in building relationships within the small groups and modeling the *Strategies* before their small group members.
- A key, non-negotiable element in the discipleship process is *time*. Nearly all realms of the maturation process require time: whether the growth of a seed, the development of a deep meaningful relationship or the training of a child. We have tried to deliver *Strategies* in shorter time-frames (as short as a weekend) only to discover that the life change we were accustomed to experiencing in the longer time-frames did not occur in the really short ones. Allow God time to work in people's lives.
- View new life coaches primarily from the standpoint of their new skill set rather than a job description. We have integrated life coaches in every ministry of a large church imaginable including: children's ministry, student ministry, small group leaders, facilitators of classes, ushers, greeters, worship, lay counselors (we called them life coaches) and candidates for eldership.
- We recommend that once you select *Strategies for Life Coaching* as the vehicle for training and equipping your disciple-makers and leaders, establish *Strategies* as the gateway for significant ministries like small group leaders. But use care in how you require it, so that people don't view *Strategies* as a hoop they have to jump through. When people recognize that your desire is to see them grow in Christ and be equipped for ministry, they will joyfully pursue opportunities to do so.
- Please become familiar with both the Leader's Guide and the Participant Manual. For ease of use, the page numbers in the Leader's Guide correspond with those in the Participant Manual. Words or phrases underlined in the Leader's Guide are fill-ins in the Participant Manual. The Leader's Guide contains some material not included in the Participant Manual.

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Pre-work

Books needed

- *The Dangerous Duty of Delight* by John Piper
- *Enthralled with God* by Rob Fischer
- *Celebration of Discipline* by Richard Foster

Pre-work (Please complete before the first *Strategies* session)

1. Please complete the *Strategies for Life Coaching Questionnaire* and give it to the person who will be leading you through *Strategies* at least ten days prior to its start date. Obtain the *Questionnaire* hard-copy in the front pocket of your manual or electronically from your facilitator. The *Questionnaire* is also available on the last two pages of this manual.
2. Read *Enthralled with God* by Rob Fischer and respond to the questions below. You will discuss your responses to these questions in a small group setting during the *Strategies* workshop. (Download a free copy of *Enthralled with God* on www.heapofstones.com under the "Free Stuff" tab.)
 - Identify three key insights that impacted you from *Enthralled with God*.
 - Select one of the insights from the above question. How will this insight change your relationship with God?
 - In what ways has God clearly spoken to you in the past?

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Pre-work

- What have been the greatest hindrances for you in listening to and discerning the voice of God?
3. Read John Piper's book, *Dangerous Duty of Delight* before the first session. Record your responses to the questions below. You will discuss your responses to these questions in a small group setting during the *Strategies* workshop.
- What three key insights from Piper's book impacted you most?
 - What connection is there between our enjoyment of God and our own spiritual transformation?
 - What are some things that you enjoy about God?

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Introduction

What does it mean to be a Christian?

- In our day, the term “Christian” has come to mean everything and nothing.
- The Barna Group reports that four out of ten Americans claim to be born-again Christians. But if that were the case, wouldn’t our culture be radically different? No, the question, “Are you a Christian?” is no longer a helpful one.
- Jesus’ challenge both then and now is “Follow me!” We need to be asking each other questions like, “Are you following Jesus? Is he your Leader? Do others see Jesus in you?”

Why *Strategies for Life Coaching*?

- The Strategies for Life Coaching are relational skills that equip a follower of Jesus in propelling others forward in their relationship with God. The Strategies are relational, biblical, transferable disciple-making skills.
- Strategies for Life Coaching is a caught-more-than-taught approach. It’s not mastering a body of knowledge, but a changed life that truly reflects our relationship with God and others. We cannot *teach* character issues like integrity, honesty, godliness, etc. But we can *coach* and *model* these character issues.
- Life coaching is simply a culturally relevant term for disciple making.
- The Strategies are designed to equip and empower followers of Christ for ministry.

Strategies Objectives

- Model a life of being transformed by Christ
- Unleash a bigger vision of God for others
- Courageously challenge others toward life change in Christ

Your Approach to Strategies

- As you embark on this experience, invite God to change you.
- The projects are designed to move you into proximity with him, so work them!
- As you draw near to him, you cannot remain unchanged! He will change you.

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- As he changes you, he changes others around you. What is God doing in your life right now? What does he want to change in you? (Leader, share what God is doing in your own life right now.)

Caught not taught exercise

- Lead the participants through the Fire-underwriter knot exercise and debrief (see Appendix)
- Just like this Fire-underwriter knot exercise, we want to model the *Strategies* and coach you through them.

What to Expect

- We will be doing a lot of role-playing and interacting with each other in small groups and pairs.
- Plan to spend time each week on the projects. We cannot emphasize too strongly how important the projects are. Think of the projects as opportunities to invite God to change you. Some of the projects may make you feel uncomfortable because they will stretch you. By not working the projects, you would be denying yourself these opportunities! So, please work them and watch God change you!
- Expect and anticipate that God is going to work in your life during this experience!
- If you miss a week, please meet with someone from your table group to get caught up. In that way, both of you win!

Small group discussion of Pre-work

- Have the participants break up into gender-specific small groups (3-6 people) to discuss their pre-work assignments.

Projects

- Make sure to get your *Lifestyle Benchmarks* distributed and returned by session three.
- Complete any of the pre-work left unfinished!

Strategy 1

Model a life of being transformed by Christ

This is the Key Strategy!

- What is God's plan, God's design for every child of his during our life here on earth? Why did he save us and reconcile us to himself? See Romans 8:29; 12:1-2; Ephesians 2:10; 4:20-24; Philippians 1:6; 2:13; Colossians 2:6-7; 3:1-14; Titus 1:16a; 1 Peter 1:14-15.
- We say that *modeling a life of being transformed by Christ* is the key *Strategy*. Why is that? (We can't share what we don't have. The other two *Strategies* are stripped of power if we ourselves don't experience life change in Christ.)
- Wayne Cordeiro of New Hope Christian Fellowship in Hawaii says, "You can teach what you know, but in the end, you will reproduce what you are." The fact of the matter is we don't have a choice about whether we want to *model* life in Christ for others! No matter who you are, others are watching you. You and I *are* models of Christ followers for others whether we like it or not.
- Let's look more closely at the biblical principle of modeling. Have them look up and read aloud: 1 Corinthians 4:16; 11:1; Philippians 3:17; 1 Thessalonians 1:6-7; 2 Thessalonians 3:7, 9; 1 Timothy 4:12; Titus 2:7; 1 Peter 5:2-3; and Hebrews 13:7. What do all these passages have in common? How can Paul and these others be so bold as to urge others to follow them? (What was Paul's qualifier in 1 Cor 11:1?)
- When we speak of *a life of being transformed by Christ* we refer to a continuous process of God's work in our lives that expresses itself in transformation of our thoughts, words and actions. We like to refer to this continuous transformation in Christ as the concept of our spiritual *trajectory*. We make constant course corrections in our life, aligning ourselves with God.
- The Apostle Peter urges his readers to "Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 3:18). This pattern of consistent growth in Christ is our spiritual trajectory.
- Your trajectory looks different than mine or that of others. We must not compare ourselves to each other. Jesus Christ is both our goal and our standard. Are you on a trajectory of growth and transformation in your life toward him?
- There are four Actions that we've identified to help us with this first Strategy. (Have them refer to the *Strategies* model to view these four Actions.) We will spend one week on each of the Actions for this first *Strategy*. Then for the second and third *Strategies* we'll double up and take two Actions per week.

Action 1: Model the enjoyment of God

Why the *enjoyment* of God?

- First, the enjoyment of God expresses our purpose in life.
 - The old Westminster Catechism captures the spirit of God's revelation when it poses the question: "What is the chief end of man?" And the response: "To glorify God and enjoy him forever." Enjoying God is not about us, but about him. (Example of enjoyment of holding a newborn.)
 - John Piper simplifies this further for us explaining, "God is most glorified in us, when we are most satisfied in him."
 - Read Psalm 16:2 and 11; Psalm 37:4; Psalm 73:25; Philippians 3:7-8.
- Second, the enjoyment of God supplies our motivation for life change.
 - It is only in desiring God that we truly wish to be like him in character. Read Matthew 13:44. What was the motivation of the man who sold all he had?
 - Enjoying God is the only pure motivation for life change! God is not interested in mindless or detached obedience (see Deut 28:45-47). If our motivation for obedience degenerates to a sense of duty or obligation, we demean God's character and his glory. (Read *Dangerous Duty of Delight*, p. 38.)
- Third, the enjoyment of God is the basis of our witness to a lost world.
 - When we enjoy God, we make much of him. He is our treasure, our very great reward! Then people will long for what they see in us. They will thirst for a relationship with God. (Read 1 Peter 2:11-12.)
 - The enjoyment of God is based in our relationship with him. Salvation is God reconciling sinners to himself and inviting us into a "daddy" (Abba—Father) joy-filled relationship with him.
- Fourth, the enjoyment of God is the only way to get through suffering and severe trial.
 - "The joy of the Lord is our strength," declares Nehemiah 8:10
 - Our enjoyment of God transcends and remains untouchable regardless of our circumstances – Phil 4:4-7. "God's glory shines more brightly when he satisfies us in times of loss than when he provides for us in times of plenty." (John Piper, *Don't Waste Your Life*, p. 72.)

Action 1: Model the enjoyment of God

A four-step process toward enjoying God

1. Think rightly about God! Many of us grew up with a conception of God that is horribly flawed. Wrong thinking about God may lead us to be afraid of him, find it difficult to believe he always seeks the best for us, or question why he would even take an interest in our daily lives. But Hebrews 11:6 explains, "And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him."

Do we really believe that God loves us, wants to give us good things and be intimately involved in our daily lives?

2. Trust God and open your eyes to his goodness and love in your life and all around you. As King David challenges us in Psalm 34:8, "Taste and see that the Lord is good."

Deliberately place yourself in a position to trust and experience God. Trust him (Proverbs 3:5-6). Expect and watch for his goodness in your life.

During the economic downturn in late 2008, Luke and Jessica were both out of work. This drove them to trust God for their daily needs in new ways that they had not trusted him with before. On one occasion, they owed a bill of \$37.00, but could only come up with \$36.00. They prayed asking God to meet their needs.

That day, Jessica went out to get the mail and found it all to be junk mail. She was about ready to toss one of these junk mail letters into the trash, when the Holy Spirit prompted her to open it. Inside was a survey accompanied by a crisp \$1.00 bill. At any other time, they would have thought nothing of this dollar. But in the face of their need and dependence on God, they clearly saw his provision! Are we expecting and looking for God's gracious work in our lives? Psalm 16:11

3. Remove all distractions (Assign these four passages to different people and have them read them.)
 - Romans 6:11-12 – Sin. Sin may include things we wouldn't first think of like indulging in thought patterns of anger, an addictive habit, or lashing out with our tongue.
 - Matthew 13:22 – "The worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth."
 - Hebrews 12:1-2 – "Everything that hinders" us (Luke 10:38-42).
 - Revelation 2:4 – Misplaced or competing affections. Quote Psalm 73:25

Action 1: Model the enjoyment of God

4. Boast to others how awesome God is! This makes much of God and completes your enjoyment of him. – Psalm 34:1-3
 - Have you ever seen a spectacular sunset or some other breathtaking scene outdoors? Our enjoyment over that beautiful sight is not complete until we've shared it with someone else (Psalm 66:5).
 - So it is with God. Let others know what he's doing in your life!

What do you enjoy about God?

1. In your pre-work, you wrote down some things that you enjoy about God. Break into your table groups and share those things with each other.

2. Think back on a situation in which God's presence and work was very evident in your life. Share that experience with your table group. What did this experience reveal to you about God's character? In what ways did that experience reinforce what the Bible says about God?

3. Spend time praying with each other thanking God for what he's done and is doing in your lives. Thank him for who he is and for the things you enjoy about him.

4. Go over pre-work

Action 1: Model the enjoyment of God

Projects:

1. Memorize Psalm 73:25 (see memory verse cards on the last few pages of this notebook).
2. Spend an hour in solitude with God. You may want to meditate on Matthew 7:11; Psalm 73:25 and Hebrews 11:6. Simply enjoy him. Resist the temptation to have to be doing something and listen to him.
3. In casual conversation, express your enjoyment of God by telling at least two people what he is doing in your life. (Make much of him!)
4. Read Foster's *Celebration of Discipline*, chapters 1 and 2.
 - What is the primary purpose of the disciplines?
 - Based on the section, "The Spiritual Disciplines Open the Door" on pages 6-9, describe what God is currently doing in your life.
 - What one new insight did you gain from each chapter?
5. Make sure to get your *Lifestyle Benchmarks* distributed and returned by session three.
6. Begin praying for someone to invest in as a life coach. (This life-coaching project will begin during the third *Strategy* and continue for four weeks. Please follow a men with men, women with women practice. Refer participants to the Appendix for the content of this project. Encourage them to let God lead them in whom they should life coach.)

Action 2: Model a life of abiding in Christ

1. Pray
2. What is God doing in your life?
3. Review

Read John 15:5-8

Discuss the analogy of the vine and branches. (Use a live plant as a prop to enhance the analogy.)

- The branch draws all its nourishment from the vine.
- The branch cannot exist apart from the vine.
- The branch is what it is because of the vine (DNA).
- The vine is designed to produce fruit.
- The branch does not struggle or strain to produce fruit, but does so naturally as part of the vine.

We use an illustration to demonstrate what Jesus means when he tells us to remain in him. We call this the *Abiding Illustration*. I'm going to model it for you, then ask you to break into pairs and practice it on each other.

Demonstrate the *Abiding Illustration* using props at hand, John 15:5 and Galatians 5:22-23. (To do this best, use either a real incident from the past or create a simulation using someone in the room.)

- Ask the participants to pair off and role-play the Abiding Illustration, mimicking what you did, props and all. (Their role-play partner is struggling with outbursts of anger.)
- Remind them to use John 15:5 and Galatians 5:22-23 and vine-and-branches props.

Debrief exercise:

- How did it go?
- It may have felt mechanical to you this time around, but after a couple of times it will flow from you so naturally, that people will think you made it up—and that's OK with us! The point is we want to lead people to dependence on Jesus.

Action 2: Model a life of abiding in Christ

How do we abide in Christ?

Abiding or remaining in Christ is very relational. We are literally “hanging out with Jesus.” We are living in him. Through our proximity with him he changes us. In fact, as we draw near to him we cannot remain unchanged.

The spiritual disciplines are tools that help us cultivate our relationship with him. Reading the Word, prayer, solitude, meditation and the other disciplines aid us in our relationship with Christ. That’s why we’re spending time investigating and experimenting with the spiritual disciplines.

Abiding or remaining in Christ is synonymous with our relationship with the Holy Spirit. The Bible speaks of being filled with the Holy Spirit; living or walking in the Holy Spirit; and being led and controlled by the Holy Spirit. Read Romans 8:5-14 and Galatians 5:16-25.

Reinforce these truths and model with personal examples:

- Fruit bearing requires proximity with Jesus, not performance! We don’t produce fruit by trying harder.
 - Abiding or remaining in Christ (living a Spirit-filled life) is all about dependence on him.
 - Note: a brand new follower of Christ can abide in him! Abiding does not require maturity or longevity as a follower. Spiritual maturity results from abiding.
- Beware of compartmentalizing your time with God. We don’t “tank up on” God in a quiet time and then go off on our own. We want to stay connected with him 24/7!
- Staying connected to him is directly linked to our enjoyment of him.
- Abiding in (dwelling with) Christ implies a close relationship in which communication is rich and flowing. So, expect him to talk with you; learn to recognize and listen to his voice; and follow through with what he tells you.
- Leverage the inward disciplines of prayer, study and meditation of the Word and fasting to help you abide in Christ. Never substitute the discipline for the relationship!
- As you abide in Christ, get to know his character. Respond to him accordingly and imitate him. (We cannot respond rightly to him if we don’t think rightly about him.) Ephesians 4:32-5:2

Action 3: Model a life of imitating God

1. Pray
2. What is God doing in your life?
3. Review

Paul challenges us in Ephesians 5:1-2, "Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God." And 1 John 2:6 says, "Whoever claims to live in him must walk as Jesus did."

What is it about God that we want to imitate?

- His character, which translates to a lifestyle of godly living, or godliness.
- Godliness = Christlikeness; alignment with God; a God-centered life; a Kingdom lifestyle, a Spirit-filled life. Godliness is alignment with the character and values of God.

Why do we want to imitate God's character?

- God created us to be his image-bearers. His plan and desire are for us to become like him in character. (2 Corinthians 3:18; 1 Peter 2:9-12)
- A follower of Jesus Christ longs to be like him! This is what it means to follow Jesus or to be his disciple. (Luke 9:23; 1 Timothy 4:7-8; Titus 2:11-14; 1 John 3:2-3)

How do we imitate God?

If you want to become like someone, what do you do? Spend lots of time with him. Observe him. Follow him around. Listen to him. Talk with him. Mimic what he does and says and understand and emulate *why* he does what he does and says. In short, imitating Jesus requires proximity with him. (Sounds like abiding, doesn't it? Notice that the branch takes on the character of the vine and not that of the fruit. See Mark 3:14; John 13:15; 1 John 2:6.)

We want to give you three major characteristics of imitating God:

1. **Imitating God calls for an open and honest life before God and others.** Ever since mankind sinned in the garden, our natural tendency has been to hide the shame of our sin from God and others (see Genesis 3:6-10). But spiritual transformation requires that we allow God to expose our sin and deal with it. See Proverbs 28:13. Both Paul and John speak of this in terms of "walking in God's light." See Ephesians 5:8-14 and 1 John 1:5-7.

Action 3: Model a life of imitating God

Jesus lived an authentic life here on earth. He lived his life openly before his disciples clearly demonstrating before them (and us) what a godly life looks like. Though he did not sin, he was unashamed to let them see him vulnerable when he was tired, thirsty, sad, hungry, mocked and ridiculed by others or in agony. He modeled before them the very character of God in everything he did.

- a. We might as well live openly and honestly before God, because nothing is hidden from him anyway! So, agree with God about your sin. Invite him to expose any sin or uncleanness in your life (Psalm 139:23-24).
 - b. Being open and honest with God means being authentic with our spiritual partners as well. (See James 5:16.) Confess your sins to a person you know you can trust.
 - c. What spiritual disciplines can we leverage to help us live openly and honestly before God? (Prayer, fasting, solitude, simplicity, and confession.)
2. **Imitating God requires action on our part.** We are not passive by-standers in the process of our transformation. Read Philippians 2:12-13.

Read 2 Peter 1:3-9. In this passage, we find two key principles that work together to help us imitate Christ: *dependence* and *diligence*. (See also Colossians 1:29.)

- a. Reread vs. 3-4. How does this passage indicate our *dependence* on God for imitating him (or pursuing godliness)?
- b. Reread vs. 5-9. How does this passage demonstrate our *diligence* in pursuing godliness? We are not passive spectators in the process of becoming more like Jesus. By the way, what are these things listed in vs. 5-7? (The very character of God.)
- c. Picture dependent diligence as walking the high ridge of God's path. There are two dangerous tendencies falling off either side of this ridge: laxity and legalism.
 - i. Laxity is a perversion of our *dependence* on God to the point in which we would insist that God alone has any role to play in our sanctification (the discipleship process or life change in Christ). Laxity is a "let go and let God" mentality to the extreme. Laxity yields an undisciplined life—a victim mentality—resigned to living in the flesh because "we can't help it." (See Romans 6:12-14.)
 - ii. Legalism is a perversion of *diligence*, which elevates the disciplines and other "Christian behaviors" as ends in themselves. Legalism has a "God helps those who help themselves" mentality and focuses on *us*

Action 3: Model a life of imitating God

and what *we* do, rather than on God. Legalism fosters a judgmental and hypocritical lifestyle in which we constantly compare ourselves and gauge our own spirituality by others' behaviors. (See Colossians 2:20-23 and 2 Corinthians 10:12.)

3. **Imitating God means living a fully integrated life.** An integrated life is a life of integrity. It's a life without duplicity. Jesus lived and exemplified a life of complete integrity before God and men. So much so, that even his enemies could find nothing to accuse him of. And Jesus always lived not to please himself, but the Father who had sent him (John 5:30).

Example of a parachute: If you were a sky diver and discovered one day that your parachute had a small tear in it, would you still jump with that chute? No! Why not? We would say that the *integrity* of the chute has been compromised and the whole thing could tear. So it is with our lives.

One of the chief ways we *compromise the integrity* of our lives is when we live a compartmentalized life. Jesus challenges us to live a fully integrated life with God in Matthew 6:33 (read). What does it mean to "seek first God's kingdom"?

- a. Many Christians read this verse and understand it like this, "Make God your first priority and all other things will fall in place behind him." Why is that not a correct understanding of this verse and the concept of singleness of heart that Jesus is teaching here?
- b. God is not a priority among our priorities! He is the *I AM*, the *Alpha and Omega*, the *Beginning and the End*! He is God and besides him there is no other. We Americans are obsessed with a priority-driven mentality. When we see God as a priority among priorities, we divide up our lives into various compartments.
- c. Ask: what are some compartments we create in our lives? We have our *God compartment* in which we go to church, attend a Bible study and even keep a quiet time. Then we have our *job compartment*, our *family compartment*, our *recreation compartment*, etc. In Christian circles we actually encourage compartmentalizing when we chant the mantra, "God first, family second, then church, then job, etc."
- d. Compartmentalizing promotes sin because we don't see our lives as an integrated whole in which God rules over all we do. So we find ourselves allowing liberties in one compartment that we would never allow in another. We may maintain a different standard in our vocabulary, behavior and dress depending on the compartment we find ourselves in. Read 1 Corinthians 10:31 and Colossians 3:17. Read and explain Haggai 2:11-14 in this context.

Action 3: Model a life of imitating God

- e. Instead, we must follow the example of Jesus and live a fully integrated life, with God as the *I AM* of all our life and everything we do.
- f. Here again, spiritual disciplines can help us live a fully integrated life. Prayer, study and meditation of the word, solitude, simplicity and spiritual partnerships can help us maintain a life of integrity before God and people.

How do we *model* a life of imitating God?

We've discussed so far what it means to imitate God, but how do we *model* such a life? Jesus himself showed us how to do this. Very simply, we must also imitate Jesus in *modeling* this life of godliness.

- Invest in other's lives and live your life openly and in proximity with other people. Let them see God at work in and through you. Jesus said, "The very work that the Father has given me to finish, and which I am doing, testifies that the Father has sent me" John 5:36. See also 1 Peter 2:11-12.
- Always make much of God in all you do. Give him the credit for what he's doing in and through you. Even Jesus said, "By myself I can do nothing...for I seek not to please myself but him who sent me" John 5:30.

Lifestyle Benchmark Exercise (You can move this to week four if participants need another week to receive their *Lifestyle Benchmarks* back.)

One of the ways God changes us is through input from others. The *Lifestyle Benchmark* provides us with a very unique opportunity to receive feedback from six individuals who know us. Consider this feedback a gift from God that we rarely experience!

In a moment, I'm going to give you the opportunity to open your envelopes and go over your feedback. These *Lifestyle Benchmarks* are for your eyes only, unless you choose to share them with someone else.

From experience we can tell you that among this group there will probably be a wide variety of responses and reactions to the feedback. Some of you will be surprised—maybe even shocked at the data—while others of you will find exactly what you expected. Please do not try to decipher who wrote what! That's not the point! Instead, invite God to put his finger on an area of your life and let him begin to change you.

If God uses the *Lifestyle Benchmark* to reveal one or more areas of your life he wants to change, this is a great opportunity to leverage the spiritual disciplines to help you draw on God's power to change you. Go ahead and open your envelopes. I'm going to give you just a few minutes to review the feedback, but we recommend that you spend more time alone later going over the data, digesting it and talking with God about it. *Pray with the group.*

Action 3: Model a life of imitating God

Projects:

- Memorize 2 Peter 1:3.
- Meditate on 2 Peter 1:3. Use a method for meditation that involves posing open-ended questions¹ about the passage. This method will help you understand the passage better, personalize its application for you, and deepen your relationship with God.

Generate these open-ended questions through “chewing on” the passage. (E.g., How is God’s divine power different from my own power? What are some of the things included in “everything” that I am personally dealing with in my life right now? If God, by his divine power has provided me with everything I need for life and godliness, how do I take advantage of it? Why do I sometimes not live as though he has provided everything I need for life and godliness? etc.) The questions you meditate on and seek to answer from the passage and its surrounding text will be more significant for you if you come up with them on your own.

- List the open-ended questions you come up with for this passage. (You may use or tweak those provided as well.)
- Write down your musings or responses to your open-ended questions.
- Allow God’s Word (truth) to penetrate your heart and mind. Let him change you!
- Read *Celebration of Discipline*, chapter 4 on Fasting.
 - What one new insight did you gain from this chapter?
 - Engage in a fast of your choosing with the purpose of centering on God. Ask him to help you focus on a particular aspect of his character that you desire to make your own. In other words, leverage this spiritual discipline to help you become more like him. Use Galatians 5:22-23 and 2 Peter 1:5-7 as a guide. Record your experience here.
- Continue praying for someone to invest in as a life coach.

¹ An open-ended question cannot be answered with a “yes” or “no.”

Action 4: Model spiritual partnership

1. Pray
2. What is God doing in your life?
3. Review

Spiritual partnership is one of the most powerful, yet most neglected approaches for pursuing relationship with Christ resulting in life change. Somewhere we got the idea that we're supposed to do this thing on our own—or at least without the help of others. But we cannot grow in Christ—become more Christlike—apart from partnership with other followers of Christ.

Life change takes place in spiritual partnerships

Life change occurs in spiritual partnerships for at least three reasons:

- First, we become like those we spend time with (1 Corinthians 15:33).

Example: A good friend of mine was coaching me in the skills of winter alpine hiking. He was in front of me kick-stepping a trail up a steep, snow-covered grade. But my friend has a quirk resulting from reconstructive surgery. His left foot is splayed outward at a significant angle. I had been following my friend's footsteps for some time when I looked down and began laughing out loud. Without knowing it, by following his footsteps I was turning my left foot out and walking just like he was! We become like those we follow.

- Second, spiritual partnerships are a biblical model for life change. This was Jesus' pattern with the disciples and the apostles' pattern for ministry. (Philippians 2:19-23)

From the Gospel records, we observe that Jesus stepped into spiritual partnership with his disciples. His example reveals at least five elements of spiritual partnership:

- He spent time together with them in real life.
- He accepted them where they were.
- He encouraged them.
- He cared for (loved) them.
- And he challenged them boldly in God's truth.

We'll look at these five elements of spiritual partnership more closely in a few minutes.

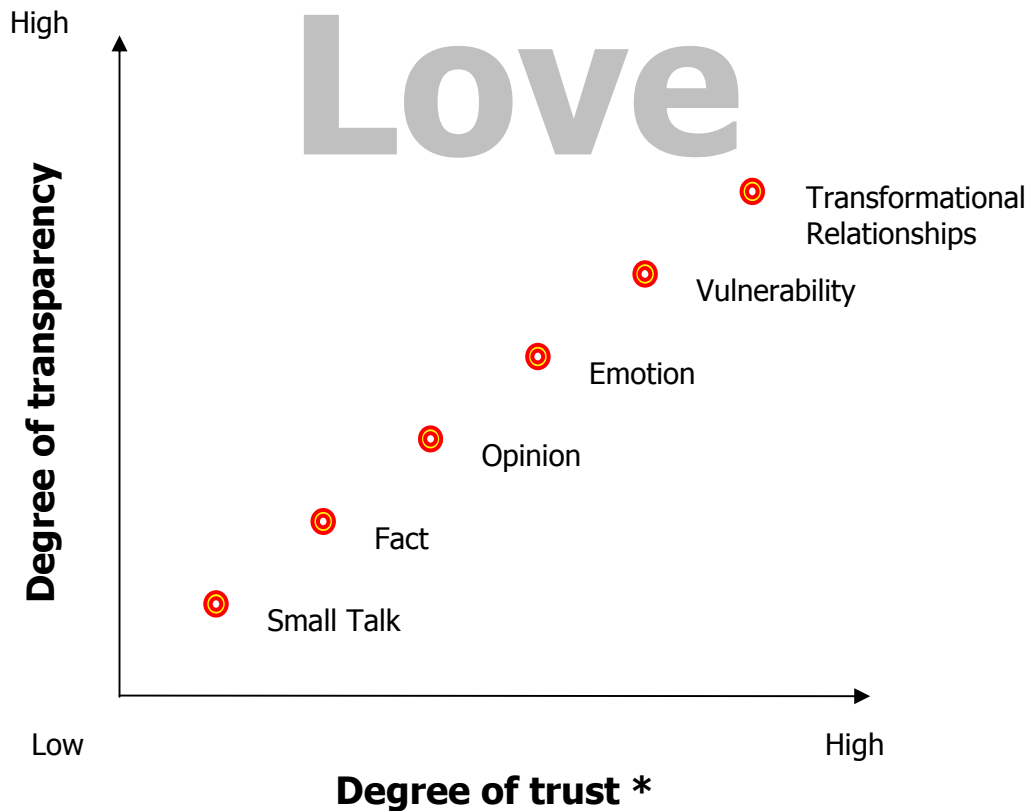
Action 4: Model spiritual partnership

- Third, spiritual partnerships are a strategic approach to life change in Jesus Christ, because:
 - The whole is greater than the sum of its parts. Ecclesiastes 4:9 NLT, "Two people can accomplish more than twice as much as one; they get a better return for their labor." One draft horse can pull 3,000 lbs. dead weight, but two draft horses yoked together can pull 8,000 lbs. dead weight!
 - We need protection. Ecclesiastes 4:12 NLT, "A person standing alone can be attacked and defeated, but two can stand back-to-back and conquer."
 - The nature of the change God wants to bring about in us requires relationship. God's character traits are revealed in the relationships we cultivate. The fruits of the Spirit (Gal 5:22-23) are all relational in nature.

What's the difference between *mentorship* and *partnership*?

As a life coach, you will be *mentoring* others. While the mentor always gains from and learns a lot from his/her apprentice, the mentor relationship is primarily what we might call "down-ward." But in a spiritual partnership, the relationship is *mutual*, reciprocal and horizontal. This particular Action refers to this *mutual, reciprocal relationship* between our spiritual partners and us. (Give personal examples.)

Action 4: Model spiritual partnership



* Concept adapted from John Powell, *Why Am I Afraid to Tell You Who I Am?*

Explain the stages of the model using the example of standing in line at a supermarket and striking up a conversation with a total stranger.

Vulnerability vs. Transformational Relationship

This original model ended at *vulnerability*. We added *transformational relationships*. There is a chasm between vulnerability and transformational relationship. Many of us enjoy vulnerability or transparency in relationships without ever experiencing life transformation. Vulnerability is good but does not get us to life change. The courageous challenge (the third *Strategy*) gets us beyond vulnerability to transformational relationship.

Action 4: Model spiritual partnership

John 4:4-26, 39 demonstrates how Jesus moved this conversation with the woman at the well to transformational relationship in just a few minutes! This process does not necessarily take days, months or years! Also, God can speak to a person at any stage of the process.

Go over the five elements of spiritual partnerships. For reasons of both propriety and impact, we practice same-gender spiritual partnerships. (Provide personal examples to model each of the elements.)

- *Spend time together in real life.* Why is this so important? No pretence! Seeing someone in a wide variety of life situations provides us with a complete picture of that person's walk with Jesus. See Mark 3:14, "He chose twelve...that they might be with him." We must live an authentic, exposed life before others. 1 Thessalonians 2:8-10
- *"Accept one another...just as Christ accepted you."* Romans 15:7 (You may find your spiritual partner is very different than you!)
- *Encourage each other.* Read 1 Thessalonians 5:11.
- *Care for one another.* Be there for each other. Offer your time, money, hospitality, etc. John 13:34-35
- *Challenge each other boldly in God's truth.* This one is the most difficult and requires courage! But it's also the most crucial for life change to occur. Hebrews 10:24 (spur, provoke, motivate). Here's where we ask "tough" questions (door-opening questions) and listen intently. Grant each other permission to ask tough questions.
 - What has God been doing in your life lately?
 - Where are you reading in the Word right now?
 - What's God showing you in his Word?
 - What are your greatest joys/challenges in your walk with Jesus right now?
 - How's your relationship with your spouse?
 - What's one thing you'd like God to do in your life right now?

In pairs: Partner up with someone at your table right now and pose at least two of these questions to each other. Listen to each other's responses and pray for each other accordingly.

Strategy 2

Unleash a bigger vision of God for others

1. Pray
2. What is God doing in your life?
3. Review

Four Actions

- 1** Through our story
- 2** Through his works
- 3** Through his Word
- 4** Through prayer

Action 1: Unleash a bigger vision of God through our story

Begin this session by setting up and conducting the following two simulations.

Simulation one

Meet casually with small talk, then lead into . . .

Role A: I don't know what's going on lately, but I'm really struggling with trusting God in my life.

Role B: I understand exactly how you feel. All of us from time to time experience emotions like that. So don't sweat it! Hey, I was going to ask you, what did you think of that game the other night?

Simulation two

Meet casually with small talk, then lead into . . .

Role A: I don't know what's going on lately, but I'm really struggling with trusting God in my life.

Role B: What specifically are you struggling with?

Role A: Does God really answer prayers? I feel like I pray and nothing happens.

Role B: There are times when I feel the same way you do right now, but to answer your question, yes! God does answer prayer! Let me share something that happened just the other day...(have this person actually share an answer to prayer they recently experienced).

Debrief

After hearing both simulations, ask the participants:

- What was the difference between the two role-plays?
- What did the second role-play do for you that the first did not?

Action 1: Unleash a bigger vision of God through our story

In the first Strategy we focus on modeling a life of being transformed by Christ. We must live in a growing and abiding relationship with him!

The second Strategy we now come to is unleashing a bigger vision of God for others. What we mean by that is simply helping people take their eyes off themselves and their circumstances and lifting them up to God. We want to make much of God before others, so they too will trust him and desire him!

One of the best ways to make much of God and unleash a bigger vision of who he is for others is by sharing our own story of what he has done and is doing in our lives. God will powerfully impact others when they hear what he is doing in your life!

Ask various individuals to look up the following passages and discuss how this passage demonstrates what it means to unleash a vision of God for others: Luke 8:38-39; John 4:28-30, 39.

Paul regularly made use of his story of conversion to unleash a bigger vision of God for others: (See Acts 9:1-9; 9:27; 22:1-21; 26:4-18.)

Paul also unleashed a bigger vision of God for others by sharing what God was doing in his life as he followed Christ. (See 2 Corinthians 1:8-11; 4:1-18; 5:1-10; 12:7-10; Philippians 1:12-26.)

There are three simple characteristics to keep in mind as we unleash a vision of God through our story:

- Keep it fresh! The point here is that the story we tell people to unleash a vision of God for them must be alive and be the natural result of a life spent in communion with him. It's okay to tell people what God has done in your life in the distant past too, but what is God doing right now?
- Keep it God-centered! Remember, the purpose of sharing our story is to make much of God, not ourselves.
- Keep it specific! Sharing generalities about God or my life in God is not compelling and may sound phony! Note the difference between saying:
1) God has been showing me neat stuff in his Word lately. And ...
2) God showed me the coolest thing in his Word the other day from Romans 8:15 ...!

Leader: share a fresh, God-centered story of God's work in your life right now!

Action 1: Unleash a bigger vision of God through our story

Exercise

Take a few minutes right now and think of something that God has recently done in your life (a *fresh* story). Don't write out the story longhand, but just jot down the situation. Summarize how this incident magnified God in your eyes.

- In your table groups take turns sharing your stories and magnifying God.
- Ask each other: "How does this story unleash a bigger vision of God for you?"

Action 1: Unleash a bigger vision of God through our story

Projects:

- Memorize Luke 8:39.
- Write a fresh story of God's work in your life. Keep it to less than a page. As you write it, focus on how it will unleash a vision of God for others.
- Share the above story with at least two people and record your experience here.

- Read chapter 6 on Simplicity in *Celebration of Discipline*.
 - What one new insight did you gain from this chapter?

 - In Foster's introduction of this discipline he remarks, "Simplicity is freedom. Duplicity is bondage. Simplicity brings joy and balance. Duplicity brings anxiety and fear." 1) Spend some time with God asking him to reveal any issue in your life for which simplicity could bring freedom, joy and balance. 2) Then, work that issue through the three "inward realities" of simplicity described on pages 88-89 of Foster's book. 3) Finally, ask God to show you what kind of outward expression of simplicity you could pursue that will affect the way you live with the issue you've identified.

- Begin investing in your apprentice as a life coach. Please find the plan and materials in the Appendix at the back of this manual.

Action 2: Unleash a bigger vision of God through his works

1. Pray
2. What is God doing in your life?
3. Review

Simulation

(Ask for two volunteers of the same gender.) You (role A) and your friend (role B) are camping. For the past couple of hours you have been sitting around the campfire talking. Your friend has been dealing with a lot of issues lately, including being fired from his/her job, arguments with his/her spouse over that, and, as if it couldn't get any worse, his/her car was stolen! The bottom line is that your friend is struggling with whether God really loves him/her.

Although it has been dark for hours, the fire has been so bright and the conversation so intense that neither of you had noticed the night sky. As your fire has dwindled to dimly glowing coals, you both look up and stare up at the sky in complete awe.

Role A: Can you believe this? I've never seen so many stars!

Role B: Yeah, and they're so bright! There's the Big Dipper, and the North Star on the Little Dipper.

((Pause: both are just staring at the sky in wonder.))

Role A: I heard a physicist speak one time and he said that there are so many stars, that if you set the most powerful computer in the world to counting them, computing as fast as it does, it would take the computer billions of years to count them all!

Role B: I can't even begin to imagine the power and the knowledge and the creativity that God wielded in creating the universe!

Role A: You got that right! As immense and complex as this all is, God is infinitely greater and more magnificent! I love that verse in Psalm 147 that says, "He determines the number of stars and calls them each by name."

You know, I can't help but think about your current situation and how the vastness of the universe puts it all into perspective. *(Very caringly)* If God called all this into being by speaking a word, just think of what he can do in your situation! And if he knows the stars by name, think about how much more he cares for you, his child!

Role B: Yeah. You're absolutely right. God is infinitely bigger than these temporary problems I'm experiencing. And He is good!

Action 2: Unleash a bigger vision of God through his works

Read Psalm 66:5. Again, what we are attempting to do in unleashing a bigger vision of God for others is to help them take their eyes off themselves and their circumstances and lift them up to God. We want to make much of God before others! (Quote Psalm 66:5 again.) Paul used this Action when taking the Gospel to the people in Lystra in Acts 14:15-17. Notice how he draws attention to the works of God (read).

Unleash a vision of God through his works for the participants. (Use a personal example.)

- We are prone to forget what God has done, so remember, do not forget, recount, review, and rehearse! Deuteronomy 6:10-12
- We must open our eyes and observe God's works around us! Psalm 104; Philippians 1:12-14.

We can unleash a vision of God through his works in creation, in history, in other's lives, poetry, music, art, etc.

The love of God is greater far
Than tongue or pen can ever tell,
It goes beyond the highest star
And reaches to the lowest hell;
The guilty pair, bowed down with care,
God gave his Son to win:
His erring child he reconciled
And pardoned from his sin.

Could we with ink the ocean fill
And were the skies of parchment made,
Were every stalk on earth a quill
And every man a scribe by trade,
To write the love of God above
Would drain the ocean dry,
Nor could the scroll contain the whole
Though stretched from sky to sky.

O Love of God, how rich and pure!
How measureless and strong!
It shall forevermore endure
The saints' and angels' song.²

² "The Love of God," F.M. Lehman, copyright 1917, renewed 1945 by Nazarene Publishing House.

Action 2: Unleash a bigger vision of God through his works

Practice

1. Take a few minutes alone and think of one or two works of God that have caused you to focus on him. (Again, a work of God can be from his creation, something he has done in someone else's life, from history, poetry, music or art.) Specifically, how has this work of God unleashed a bigger vision of him for you personally?
2. Share one of these works of God with those at your table.
3. As you listened to others share a work of God, how did those works unleash a bigger vision of God for you?

Action 3: Unleash a bigger vision of God through his Word

1. Pray
2. What is God doing in your life?
3. Review

Remember, in this second Strategy of unleashing a bigger vision of God, we want to make much of him before others. We're boasting about him and want to help people see who he really is and what he's really like. Our purpose in unleashing a bigger vision of God for others is to help them take their eyes off themselves and their circumstances and lift them up to God.

We unleash a bigger vision of God in at least four ways. Last week we saw the power of unleashing a bigger vision of God through our story and through his works. Today we'll experiment with unleashing a bigger vision of God through his Word and prayer.

Keep in mind that while the *Strategies* involve skills that we can develop with practice, it is also true that in them we are always totally dependent on God. We must learn to be sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit in our lives in terms of when and how to unleash a vision of God in someone's life.

Read Romans 10:17 (NASV), "So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ."

God reveals himself to us in his Word. We must think rightly about him if we are to trust him and grow in our relationship with him. When we unleash a vision of God from his Word for others, we reveal to them a truth, characteristic or activity of God that is relevant to their lives.

Listen to what God says about his Word. (Have participants look up the following passages: Romans 15:4; 2 Timothy 3:15-17.)

Unleashing a bigger vision of God for someone from his Word is not a mechanical exercise in which we just "plug in" a verse that's fitting for the moment. Instead, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom" (Colossians 3:16). When we unleash a vision of God through his Word, we're simply sharing through his Word what God is doing in our own lives. Just as with unleashing a vision of God through your story, so this Action too should be *fresh!*

The following model can help us get beyond a superficial acquaintance with God in his Word to a vital, growing relationship with him. The abundance of this overflow of our relationship with him enables us to effectively unleash a bigger vision of God for others (2 Corinthians 2:14). Our "saltiness" should make others thirsty, and using the Word we point them to Jesus, who alone can quench their thirst! (John 7:37-38)

Action 3: Unleash a bigger vision of God through his Word

Growing in God's Word

Always come to God's Word expecting to meet with Him!



Demonstrate the model using Mark 4:35-41 (See notes in Appendix.)

In what ways could we unleash a vision of God for others from this passage?

- God sometimes knowingly leads us into a storm for our good and his glory.
- In the storm things look bad—really bad! But God led us here and he is with us.
- There are times when although God is silent, he is nevertheless present with us.
- Ask yourself, “What would be a faith-response in this situation?” and then follow through with it!
- Jesus’ disciples were scared, angry and unbelieving. Yet he loved them, acting on their behalf and revealing his power.
- God is infinitely bigger and more powerful than any circumstances in which we find ourselves! He is in control! Do you need a storm calmed? Your fears quieted? Your faith strengthened? Come to Jesus!

Action 3: Unleash a bigger vision of God through his Word

Exercise

Using the *Growing in God's Word* model, spend 10 minutes exploring, meditating on and aligning your life around 1 John 1:9. To achieve the greatest impact in this exercise, think of a time when you recently blew it. (E.g., you got angry with your spouse, or child, or another motorist, etc.) Make sure you are taking 1 John 1:9 to heart personally. Record any observations below.

Simulation

Following the 1 John 1:9 exercise, pair off with another person (same gender) and take turns simulating the following scenario:

You have just bumped into your friend and after some initial small talk, your friend opens up to you by sharing that he/she is really struggling in his/her relationship with God.

Role A: Hi, (name) how are you doing? (small talk)

Role B: Hey, (name), honestly I'm not doing too well. I'm just really struggling in my relationship with God.

Role A: What's going on?

Role B: I had a fight with (my spouse, my mom/dad, my brother/sister) yesterday and said some things that I'm really ashamed of. I can't believe those things came out of my mouth. I've asked their forgiveness and I've asked God to forgive me too. But I still feel so dirty. How do I know God really has forgiven me?

Role A: (Unleash a vision of God for your friend from 1 John 1:9. As you can, refer to your own story of forgiveness in applying 1 John 1:9.)

Switch roles and go through the simulation once more.

Debrief simulation

- In what ways did your partner unleash a bigger vision of God for you from his Word?
- What did unleashing a bigger vision of God do for you? (By the way, this is what spiritual partnership feels and looks like.)

Action 3: Unleash a bigger vision of God through his Word

Projects:

- Memorize Psalm 121:1-2.
- Read chapter 8 on Submission in Celebration of Discipline.
 - What one new insight did you gain from this chapter?

 - Note what Foster says about the freedom in submission on p. 111. Let God put his finger on an area of your life in which you've wanted to get your own way. Now follow the guidelines and suggestions in this chapter to obtain freedom from this burden. Record your experience here.

- In what ways is he unleashing a vision of himself to you?

- Ask God to give you an opportunity to unleash a vision of him for someone this week using his Word. Record your experience here.

- Employ the Growing in God's Word model to Mark 12:41-44 (see also Mark 13:1-2). Record your experience here.

- Continue life coaching your apprentice (see Appendix).

Action 4: Unleash a bigger vision of God through prayer

1. Pray
2. What is God doing in your life?
3. Review

Remember, in unleashing a vision of God for others, we are helping them lift their eyes off themselves and their circumstances and up to God. In unleashing a vision of God through prayer, we are actually leading others into God's presence to show them his love, majesty and awesome power!

Read Ephesians 3:14-21. In what ways does Paul unleash a bigger vision of God for the followers at Ephesus in this prayer?

Have the participants look up the following examples of prayers that unleash a vision of God for others. See 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24; Hebrews 13:20-21; 1 Peter 1:3-5; Jude 24-25. What do you notice about these examples? (We're drawing attention to the nature, character and works of God!)

Demonstrate unleashing a vision of God through prayer with someone in the room. (Either ask someone for a request or suggest praying for someone whom you know needs praying for right now.)

Three values for unleashing a vision of God for others through prayer

- **Keep it vertical!** We are calling upon the God of the universe! We're praying to him, not lecturing to or preaching at our listeners. We are going to God on their behalf. Pray expecting God to answer!
- **Keep it biblical!** People sometimes ask for prayer in a way that may not be biblical or in line with the character or will of God. Lead the individual into the presence of God listening for his leading and praying according to his will.
- **Keep it personal!** God loves and is genuinely concerned for the one for whom we are praying. We need to rehearse and demonstrate this truth when we pray for them. Pray with empathy. Also, pray *on the spot!* Whenever someone asks for prayer or mentions something for which we could pray, take it to God right then and there!

Action 4: Unleash a bigger vision of God through prayer

Exercise

1. Take a few moments to reflect about your life right now asking God to reveal an area of your life in which you would like someone to pray for you.
2. Pair up with an individual of the same gender. One at a time, share the issue with your partner for which you'd like prayer.
3. Unleash a bigger vision of God for each other through prayer. Remember to keep it vertical, biblical and personal. Pause to listen to God.

Strategy 3

Courageously challenge others toward life change in Christ

1. Pray
2. What is God doing in your life?
3. Review

Four Actions

- 1** By applying the Word
- 2** By taking them to God in prayer
- 3** By leading people to make choices
- 4** By celebrating their personal victories

Action 1: Courageously challenge by applying the Word

Script for Courageous Challenge Demonstration

- Role A: Hi, (name), it's good to see you. How are you doing?
- Role B: *(Preoccupied)* Yeah, good to see you too. *(Angry)* I've been better!
- Role A: I'm sorry to hear that. What's going on?
- Role B: *(Angry & emotional)* I hate my job! I've got a boss who seems to have it in for me. We had a big argument today about the way I handled a client. I got so angry, I thought for sure he'd fire me!
- Role A: Were you able to make things right with your boss?
- Role B: *(Still angry)* No. I clammed up and just left.
- Role A: (Name), I understand how you feel, but what would restore your joy in this situation?
- Role B: *(Sarcastic)* A different boss or a new job!
- Role A: I know, but God is immeasurably bigger than your boss or situation. He can meet you right where you are. Could I read something for you that I read this morning in Colossians?
- Role B: *(Breaking)* Yeah, sure.
- Role A: "Since God chose you to be the holy people whom he loves, you must clothe yourselves with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. You must make allowance for each other's faults and forgive the person who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others. And whatever you do or say, let it be as a representative of the Lord Jesus, all the while giving thanks through him to God the Father." (Colossians 3:12-13, 17 NLT)
- Role B: *(Broken)* That says it pretty clearly doesn't it. I guess I need to go and ask his forgiveness for my behavior and my attitude.
- Role A: If I were you, I'd go back to him immediately!
- Role B: You're right. I need to see him right away.
- Role A: Hey, I'll call you this afternoon to see how it went with your boss.

Strategy 3: Courageously challenge others toward life change in Christ

Action 1: Courageously challenge by applying the Word

Let's review where we've come in the *Strategies*: we began with modeling a life of being transformed by Christ. Without being able to personally demonstrate the change Christ makes in a life, we cannot hope to lead others into deeper relationship with him. We do that by modeling our enjoyment of God, abiding in Christ, imitating God and partnering with other followers.

Next, we unleash a bigger vision of God for others. As we implement this Strategy, we are making much of God before others. We want to help them take their eyes off themselves and their circumstances and lift them up to God. We do this through our story, God's works, his Word and prayer. We want others to know that it is God who provides the power for a changed life.

This third Strategy is the culmination of where we've led people. They see Christ in us and they want what he's got to offer, but how do they get it? Picture a simple lever, one of the oldest of tools. Archimedes said, "Give me a lever large enough, and I can move the earth." The principle of a lever requires three things: a fulcrum, a lever and power. If we look at *Strategies* in terms of leverage, the fulcrum is modeling a victorious life in Christ. The power is unleashing a vision of God for others. And the lever is the courageous challenge.

We use a courageous challenge to urge someone to move in God's direction. We're spurring them on toward life change in Jesus Christ. It is a call to action. (Hebrews 10:24) We courageously challenge others in at least four ways: 1) by applying the Word; 2) by taking them to God in prayer; 3) by leading them to make choices; and 4) by celebrating their personal victories.

Based on Romans 15:4 and Hebrews 4:12-13, why would we use God's Word to courageously challenge someone? (God designed his Word for this purpose!)

Misuses of the Word in courageously challenging others

- As a formula – John 6:63. *The Prayer of Jabez* is an example of this (1 Chronicles 4:10). The formula approach to this passage ignores other Scripture that clearly indicates how God's people will suffer harm and endure pain for the glory of God.
- As a weapon against people – Luke 13:14. Be careful with the Word. Our purpose should never be to beat up or bloody people with it!
- As a device for manipulating or burdening others – Matthew 23:1-4; Mark 10:2-9. God's Word represents God. We must never twist or distort God's Word to make it say what *we* want it to say in someone else's life.

Action 1: Courageously challenge by applying the Word

Applying the Word effectively – 2 Timothy 3:14-17 (read)

- We apply the Word of God most effectively in the context of relationship! (See 3:14-15, then 1:5, 13-14; 2:1-2; 3:10.)
- All Scripture is *God-breathed* – what does that mean? (God spoke it. These are his very words. These words come from his being and shaped by his character.)
- All Scripture is useful for *teaching*. This is the Greek word from which we derive the word “didactic.” It means to impart truth. (E.g., Galatians 2:20)
- All Scripture is useful for *rebuking*. A rebuke is a plea to stop going in a particular direction. (E.g., Galatians 3:1-3)
- All Scripture is useful for *correcting*. Following a rebuke, we attempt to make a course correction. (E.g., Galatians 5:16)
- All Scripture is useful for *training* in righteousness. “Training” is used in Ephesians 6:4 to describe the lifelong training that goes into child-rearing. (E.g., Galatians 6:1-2)
- All Scripture *equips* us for every good work. “The man [or woman] of God” – this refers to a God-follower, not a career church-worker. We all need the teaching, rebuking, correcting and training of the Scriptures in the context of relationships to thoroughly equip us for every good work. “Work” here simply refers to any actions, deeds or behaviors. The Scripture and its application in our lives through others is essential to our becoming more Christlike, more godly!

No Formula!

We mentioned with the Action of unleashing a bigger vision of God through his Word that there is no formula by which we pre-select a verse and couple it with a given situation in someone’s life. The same is true with courageously challenging someone by applying the Word. A courageous challenge must spring from the overflow of what God is doing in our own lives.

In Titus 2:10 we’re told to conduct ourselves in such a way as to make the teaching about God *attractive*. We also saw in 2 Corinthians 3:6, “the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.” When we courageously challenge others, we want to breathe life into them, not death. Our courageous challenge should demonstrate how enticing and attractive God’s ways are! That does not mean that his way is always easy!

(For purposes of training we separate the Actions of unleashing a vision of God through his Word from courageously challenging others by applying the Word. But in real life the courageous challenge will naturally follow unleashing a vision of God. Let me give you an example of this.)

Action 1: Courageously challenge by applying the Word

Example

Let's say that we're talking with a married man who is not loving his wife as he ought to. (Let's call him Jim.) We know that he's been making unreasonable demands on her and not living with her in an understanding way. Now he's reacting poorly to her responses to him and treating her with an air of superiority and condemnation. As he's sharing these things with us it's clear that he's fishing for sympathy and an ally. But what we're going to do is unleash a vision of God for him and courageously challenge him from the Word.

"Jim, I don't know if you realize it, but you're describing God's design for a godly wife in Ephesians 5. In God's design, she would respect you and follow your leadership in the home. She would be completely devoted to you, beautiful for you and pure. God gives us an amazing picture of what a godly wife looks like! Does this describe what you'd like your wife to be like?

Then, let's see what this passage says about your role in your marriage. Would you read Ephesians 5:25-28? What does it mean, 'love your wife, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her?' God asks us as husbands to love our wives *sacrificially*.

This is a lifestyle—what we do daily! Just as Christ took the initiative with us, so you and I need to take the initiative with our wives. And the result yields what we desire and long for.

What are some ways you could love your wife sacrificially today? Will you do it? May I call you tomorrow to see how you're doing?"

Debrief

- How did this example unleash a bigger vision of God for Jim?
- How does it courageously challenge him toward life change in Christ?
- What questions or comments do you have?

Jump-starting a courageous challenge

Questions to help get things going in the right direction:

- What would you like to see God do in your life?
- What one thing in your life is preventing you from experiencing joy in your relationship with Christ?
- Share the Abiding Illustration and ask: Where are you right now in proximity with Jesus?

Strategy 3: Courageously challenge others toward life change in Christ

Action 1: Courageously challenge by applying the Word

- What is preventing you from enjoying God fully?
- What have you tried that doesn't work?
- What's your story? Tell me about your walk with Jesus.

Don't memorize these questions! Instead, catch the idea or direction behind them and craft questions that fit you and the person you're speaking with.

Action 1: Courageously challenge by applying the Word

Projects:

- Read chapter 10 on confession in *Celebration of Discipline*. What one new insight did you gain from this chapter?

- Confession project: Select a partner (men with men, women with women) before our next session with whom you will meet to practice the discipline of confession.
 - Before you meet with your partner, spend time in prayer. First, ask God to reveal to you an area of your life in which you have had a recurring struggle (e.g., anger, gossip, impure thoughts, etc.) or a specific act from your past that haunts you, from which you would like confirmation of forgiveness and freedom from guilt (Psalm 139:23-24).
 - Do not get hung-up on looking for your deepest, darkest secret! We all have issues with which we struggle, but rarely share with another person. (Reread the last two paragraphs on the bottom of page 145 to the top of page 146 in Foster.)
 - Also, pray for the individual with whom you will be meeting, asking God to refresh him/her and give them much joy in this exercise. The purpose of confession is freedom – freedom from guilt and from the sin that prompts it.
 - The Scripture exhorts us to go into confession with an attitude of humility and dependence toward God. (Read 1 Corinthians 10:12-13 and Galatians 6:1-2.)
 - Listen intently and humbly pray for each other. Look for opportunities to unleash a vision of God and courageously challenge each other.
 - Remember, vulnerability requires the strictest confidence and trust!

- Continue to life coach your apprentice spurring them into closer relationship with God.

Action 2: Courageously challenge by taking them to God in prayer

1. Pray
2. What is God doing in your life?
3. Review

Remember, we use a courageous challenge to spur others on toward life change in Jesus Christ. The courageous challenge is a call to “follow me, as I follow Christ.” The authenticity of our walk with Christ is plainly visible to others in the way we pray to God. I’m not talking about our eloquence in praying, but the depth of relationship that we reveal when we pray.

Read Colossians 1:9-14. Ask the participants to name all the explicit and implicit courageous challenges found in Paul’s prayer for the Colossian followers.

The same three values for unleashing a vision of God through prayer apply here.

- Keep it vertical! Pray to God, don’t preach at the individual.
- Keep it biblical! We must ensure that what we’re challenging others to is clearly instructed in God’s Word and in accordance with God’s character!
- Keep it personal! (Use open-ended questions to lead the individual to his/her own conclusions about what their next steps should be. Then pray to confirm that direction, asking for God’s power and protection.)

Four important aspects of a courageous challenge in prayer:

- Courageously challenging through prayer naturally follows unleashing a bigger vision of God through prayer.
- Prayer is a follow-up to a courageous challenge we have already given. Don’t initiate a courageous challenge through prayer. Why not? (That would be preaching at the individual, not praying to God.)
- Prayer demonstrates dependence on God’s power to bring about this life change.
- Prayer publicly confirms and celebrates before God and others the choice that was made to change.

Action 2: Courageously challenge by taking them to God in prayer

Simulations – Please break into pairs. Each of you should choose a different role below. You will both go through the simulation once as a life coach and once as the person described in one of the simulations that follow. Decide who will be the life coach first. The other person will take on the role he/she selected. After each simulation, debrief using the questions below.

In the role of the life coach, look for opportunities to unleash a bigger vision of God for this person using one or more of the *Actions* and then courageously challenge them by applying the Word and praying for them. You may want to use a “jump-start” at some point in your conversation. Take two minutes to become familiar with your partner’s role, and then launch into the simulation. (S1-Eph 4:25-27, 29-32; S2-Mat 6:25-34; 7:11; Phil 4:6-7)

Simulation one

Just a few hours ago, you had a blowup with one of your neighbors. You tried to confront him in a kind way about not letting his dog poop in your yard, but he got very defensive and then hostile. Some ugly and harsh words were exchanged in what degenerated to a yelling match. You are still so angry at his unwillingness to be reasonable and at the things he said, that you can’t think straight!

You feel convicted about what happened, but you also have a strong sense of justice about the issue and believe that your request was perfectly legitimate. You have come here to your friend to unload on him/her about your situation.

Simulation two

Things have been in turmoil for you at work during the past few weeks. The organization you work for initiated across-the-board reductions in pay two months ago. Everyone has been walking on pins and needles and looking out solely for themselves. Teamwork is non-existent and everybody’s fuses have been short. Now rumors are flying that deep cuts will be made in headcount as well!

You find your job and the current environment extremely stressful. You’ve been putting in long hours and haven’t slept well in weeks. You’ve had to start taking something to calm your stomach. You cannot afford to lose your job! You feel panicked and desperately out of control. You’re meeting with your friend to get some sympathy.

Debrief the simulations

- How did your partner unleash a bigger vision of God for you and how effective was it?

Action 2: Courageously challenge by taking them to God in prayer

- How did your partner courageously challenge you from the Word and how effective was it? (E.g., what actions would you take as a result of your partner's courageous challenge?)

Action 3: Courageously challenge by leading people to make choices

1. Pray
2. What is God doing in your life?
3. Review

Role-play

Role A: Hey (name)! How's it going?

Role B: I'm doing fantastic! (smiles really big!)

Role A: You look like the cat that just swallowed the canary. You must have some good news.

Role B: Wait 'til you hear this. I just bought four music CD's and their computer must have a glitch, 'cause instead of charging me \$12.99 per CD, they only charged me \$1.29 per CD. Neither the cashier nor I caught it while I was in the store, so I just got four CD's for just over five bucks! Cool, huh?

Role A: So, what do you think God wants you to do in this situation?

Role B: What do you mean?

Role A: Are you planning to go back and let them know about the error and make it right?

Role B: Come on! They made the mistake and they can afford it! I buy a lot of stuff there.

Role A: This isn't about who made the mistake or whether they can afford it. That's the way the world talks. This is about your integrity as a follower of Jesus Christ. Jesus calls you and me to a higher standard. We're his representatives!

Role B: Yeah, you're right. (resignedly) What should I do?

Role A: Don't wait another minute. Go back to the store and find that cashier and tell her what happened and that you want to make it right. Let God use this as an opportunity to glorify him by your life. Even if they don't make a big deal about it at the store, you will have the pleasure of knowing that you're following Jesus.

Role B: You are absolutely right. Hey, thanks for challenging me on this!

Role A: I will call you later to find out how things went.

Action 3: Courageously challenge by leading people to make choices

We use a courageous challenge to urge someone to move in God's direction. We're spurring them on toward life change in Jesus Christ. It is a call to action. (Hebrews 10:24) We courageously challenge others in at least four ways: 1) by applying the Word; 2) by taking them to God in prayer; 3) by leading them to make choices; and 4) by celebrating their personal victories.

Read Deuteronomy 30:19-20. Life is a series of choices. Every day, we are confronted with choices to go God's way or our own way. As Moses courageously challenged the people of Israel to choose God's way always and consistently, so we want to make those choices ourselves and challenge others in the same way.

"Good and evil both increase at compound interest. That is why the little decisions you and I make every day are of such infinite importance. The smallest good act today is the capture of a strategic point from which, a few months later, you may be able to go on to victories you never dreamed of. An apparently trivial indulgence in lust or anger today is the loss of a ridge or railway line or bridgehead from which the enemy may launch an attack otherwise impossible." – (C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*. New York: McMillan Publishing Co., 1952, p. 117.)

Our right to courageously challenge someone presupposes that we ourselves are on a trajectory of growth in Christ and are pursuing him. A courageous challenge must always be tempered by humility and a genuine desire to see a person grow in Christ. (In fact, any other motive is bogus!) We must live a transparent life demonstrating the genuineness of our walk with Christ and love for others.

Also, there is no pecking order or spiritual hierarchy that we need to adhere to when courageously challenging others. (See Galatians 6:1 "spiritual" defined in Galatians 5:16 and 25.)

Three steps

1. Determine where they are. (E.g., 1 Corinthians 1:10-11; 5:1; 6:1.)
 - a. Listen actively to God and to the individual. Use eye contact, positive body language, ask questions, pay attention and show genuine interest.
 - b. Ask great open-ended questions. (E.g., What would you like God to do in your life right now? What is preventing you from enjoying God fully? What is preventing you from experiencing joy in your life? What have you tried that doesn't work? What's your story? Tell me about your walk with Jesus.)
 - c. Find out what their needs are. Listen and comment empathically. Use their words. (E.g., "My life is crumbling around me." "I have no purpose." "I feel lost." "How do I increase my faith?")

Action 3: Courageously challenge by leading people to make choices

2. Unleash a bigger vision of God and what he has for them using one or more of the Actions for that Strategy. Give them hope in God who is greater than anything they're facing. (E.g., 1 Corinthians 1:4-9.)
3. Courageously challenge them with next steps to move them closer to God. (E.g., 1 Corinthians 1:10; 5:2; 6:7-8.)
 - a. Ask them for permission to speak into their lives. Lead them into next steps using one or more of the Actions for this Strategy. Ask for their agreement or commitment to follow through with these next steps.
 - b. Identify one or more next steps for the individual based on their situation in light of God's Word, his character and his Holy Spirit's leading. (Sometimes a courageous challenge takes the form of a leader's rally-cry for godliness: see Hebrews 10:19-25, "let us".)
 - c. Demonstrate your love for them. You're not just giving them an assignment or writing a spiritual prescription for them. Love them.
 - d. Follow up with them continuing to demonstrate your genuine care for them. "I'll call you tomorrow to see how things went."

Demonstration

Ask for a volunteer and demonstrate unleashing a vision of God and courageously challenging an individual using one of the case studies in the Appendix.

Action 3: Courageously challenge by leading people to make choices

Simulations

Please pair off and each person select a different simulation—men with men, women with women. On your own, come up with an approach for unleashing a bigger vision of God and courageously challenging the individual in your simulation. Then in pairs, role-play your response as though your partner is the person in the case study.

TOM

My wife and I have been married for 10 years, but we haven't been intimate for the past 18 months. We have three children. Our middle child is really struggling in school with disciplinary issues and poor grades. We're in deep debt and I hate my job. My wife just got promoted, but her increase in pay is eaten up by what she spends on her wardrobe in her new management position.

My wife and I both came to Christ when we were young and we still make a show of it by going to church. But somehow our Christianity just isn't relevant to our situation.

BRENDA

I can't believe it! I just got fired for showing up late for work. My boss said it was my fourth offense, but everyone else shows up late too and no one else was fired. Everything is so lax there I just didn't know my job was in jeopardy. Why is God doing this to me? I don't know what I'm going to do.

JON

I've really messed up my life! I just got my girlfriend pregnant and I don't know what to do. I know we shouldn't have been having sex and I am truly sorry for my behavior. I want to change and to please God with my life and do the right thing.

ANNIE

I recently graduated from an out-of-state college and returned home. For the past two years I was living with my boyfriend, Bret, but he broke off our relationship just before graduation. Now that I'm back in my home town nothing's the same. I'm not motivated to pursue a job or do much of anything. I really thought that Bret and I would get married. I'm all torn up inside. At times I feel used and abandoned and at other times I just ache to be with Bret again. Where's God in all this?

Debrief

How did your partner unleash a bigger vision of God for you?

How did your partner courageously challenge you?

How effective was your partner's courageous challenge?

Action 3: Courageously challenge by leading people to make choices

Projects:

- Memorize Galatians 6:1-2.
- Read chapter 12 on Guidance in *Celebration of Discipline*.
 - What one new insight did you gain from this chapter?

- Read the following passages. What do you observe in these passages about corporate guidance? (E.g., what skills and disciplines need to be exercised for corporate guidance to work well?)
 - Philippians 1:27

 - Acts 6:1-7

 - Acts 13:1-3

 - Acts 15:1-21

- Study the account of how Abigail courageously challenged David in 1 Samuel 25:1-44.
 - What is the content of Abigail's courageous challenge to David?

Action 3: Courageously challenge by leading people to make choices

Projects (continued):

- Abigail courageously challenged David from a position of weakness. Yet she exhibited great courage and strength. How did she manage to do this?

 - What made her courageous challenge effective and life-giving?

 - What were her motivations in courageously challenging David?

 - How did Abigail put a 'Y' in David's road and in what way was this a "bigger yes" for David?

 - How did Abigail demonstrate trust in God through her courageous challenge?

 - What was David's response to Abigail's courageous challenge? Why do you think he responded the way he did?

 - What applications for your own skill of courageously challenging others can you learn from Abigail?
-
- Continue your life-coaching relationship with your apprentice.

Action 4: Courageously challenge others by celebrating their personal victories

1. Pray
2. What is God doing in your life?
3. Review

This fourth action looks and feels different than the other three, but we're still focusing on spurring others toward life change in Christ. The premise behind this action is that "people repeat behavior that is rewarded or recognized." We must never underestimate the impact in someone's life of celebrating their personal victories. Celebrating others' personal victories glorifies God and motivates the individual to "excel still more" (1 Thessalonians 4:1).

Read 1 Thessalonians 1:2-10; 2:19-20; 3:8-9; 4:1; 5:11 and look for all the ways that Paul celebrated the personal victories of the Thessalonian church.

Four ways to celebrate others' personal victories:

- Tell him/her – Philemon 4, 5, 7. (See also 1 Corinthians 1:4-9.)
- Tell God about him/her in their hearing (prayer) – 1 Thessalonians 1:2-3
- Tell others in front of him/her (story telling) – Philippians 2:19-23
- Tell others who will tell him/her (story telling) – 1 Thessalonians 3:6-9

Examples

Tell him/her.

- God has really used you to encourage me!
- That was very thoughtful of you to offer to pick up Ron!
- You were very hospitable to invite us all for dinner!
- I've noticed how considerate you are with your wife. What a great testimony to what God has done in your life!

Tell God about him/her in their hearing.

- Lord, thank you for the way you have used Sara in my life to encourage me.
- Father, I'm so excited about the way that you are enabling John to trust you through these difficulties that he is experiencing.
- Lord, I praise you that you are using Ed to lead others into life change!

Action 4: Courageously challenge others by celebrating their personal victories

Examples (continued)

Tell others in front of him/her (story telling). (Be careful to maintain confidentiality.)

- Have you guys heard how God used Amy to lead some children to the Lord the other day?
- God is really working mightily in Craig's life. Today he's celebrating six months of sobriety! (The setting must be appropriate for sharing this kind of personal information!)
- Have you heard what God is doing through Jay and Sonia in their small group?

Tell others who will tell him/her (story telling). (Be careful to maintain confidentiality.)

- I understand God has really been using your son in leading the students into rich, meaningful worship. I bet you're really proud of him!
- Tell your wife what an awesome job she's doing leading that small group of women. I've heard from a number of them how God is changing their lives through her.
- I watched your husband take the initiative to stop and pray with someone the other day. That was a bold and godly thing to do! Please tell him that for me.

As we celebrate others' personal victories:

- Be alert – look for others doing things right and give praise!
- Be specific – let them know *exactly* how they're winning, especially when telling the person directly!
- Be genuine – praise should be truthful and meaningful!
- Be generous – note Paul's example!
- Be timely – the closer your celebration is to the person's victory, the more powerful it will be!

Always view celebrating someone's personal victories as an opportunity to spur them on to excellence! 1 Thessalonians 4:1; Hebrews 3:13

Action 4: Courageously challenge others by celebrating their personal victories

Examples

- I've noticed how you are letting God change your language to be appreciative instead of critical. Keep it up!
- I want to commend you on making that very difficult decision to move out of your fiancé's apartment. What will you do to remain pure sexually as you continue to prepare for marriage?
- I've noticed how considerate you are with your wife. What a great testimony to what God has done in your life! What areas do you still struggle with that I can pray with you about?

Exercise

Partner up with another individual. (Men, use the case studies for men, and women, use those designed for women.) Partners, take turns playing the role of the life coach and the role of the individuals represented here. When it's your turn to life-coach, please use one or more of the four ways to celebrate the personal victories of the person represented in the case study.

For men

JOHN

John is a man you have been life coaching for several weeks and he is gaining victory over outbursts of anger toward his wife and children. He has totally denounced this practice in his life and for the past two weeks he has been completely free of such outbursts. His freedom comes as a result of a moment-by-moment abiding in Christ.

TED

Ted has experienced total transformation in his marriage over the past three months. Before that, he and his wife had been separated for a year and not on speaking terms. He is now demonstrating a sacrificial love for her and is learning to live with her in an understanding way. He is definitely on an upward trajectory in his marriage.

Action 4: Courageously challenge others by celebrating their personal victories

For women

TANYA

Tanya is a single woman that you have been life-coaching for the past several weeks. She is gaining victory over an addiction to prescription drugs. She had been using the drugs to anesthetize herself against loneliness and feelings of worthlessness. She has also made huge strides in trusting God as her heavenly Father and receiving her self-worth from him.

JULIE

Julie grew up in a Christian home, received Christ as a child and has called herself a Christian all her life. When you started meeting with her as a life coach three months ago, she was totally disillusioned with Christianity and was carrying a lot of religious baggage. Julie is now totally in love with God! She is learning more and more each day about what it means to truly enjoy him and abide with him!

Debrief

How did it go? When you were the recipient of the courageous challenge, how did the celebration of your personal victories make you feel? In what other circumstances do you see this Action bringing great benefit?

Appendix

Four-week Life-coaching Experience

Week One: Begin your life coaching relationship

- The key focus of your four-week experience with your apprentice is to build a relationship with him/her in which you model a life of being transformed by Christ, unleash a bigger vision of God, and courageously challenge him/her toward life change in Christ.
- While we provide materials and a direction for your four meetings with your apprentice, the materials are secondary. Be sure to focus on the person and not the materials. It does not matter whether you get through all the materials. Your goal is to help move your apprentice into proximity with Christ, not to finish the materials. Lead by your example!
- For your first meeting, we recommend that you ask your apprentice to share a 30,000-foot-view of his/her story in order to discover where he/she is spiritually. Ask follow-up questions to draw out information. Find out where he/she is with God right now. (You may already know this person, but don't assume too much about his/her walk with Christ!)
- After you've heard his/her story, share your story and include a fresh look at what God is doing in your life right now.
- Explain to your apprentice that you would like to establish a partnering relationship with him/her that invites transparency and vulnerability. Grant him/her permission to ask you "tough" questions and ask their permission to ask him/her such questions.
- Model a life of being transformed by Christ, always looking for opportunities to unleash a bigger vision of God for him/her. Make it a way of life to pray with and for your apprentice!
- Find out whether he/she has a Bible and knows how to use it. Provide a brief orientation using Navigating the Bible if needed.
- Go over the John Project with him/her. Note: this is not intended to be a Bible study. It is a read-through of the Gospel of John with the intent to meet with God. We have witnessed some profound life change as people have worked through this project!
- Finally, be sure to set your next meeting time and place. Please contact your apprentice sometime between now and then just to say "hi" and see how he/she is doing. Be prepared to encourage him/her. Be alert for opportunities to unleash a bigger vision of God and courageously challenge your apprentice.

Navigating the Bible

Turn to the Table of Contents in the front of your Bible.

- Notice that the Bible has two main sections: the Old and New Testaments (*testament* means a *covenant* or *agreement* between God and mankind).
- The Old Testament (O.T.) spans from the account of creation to about 400 years before Christ. The books of the Old Testament are arranged by type of literature – not chronologically.
 - Genesis through Deuteronomy are the five books written by Moses. They are also referred to as the *Law* or the *Pentateuch*.
 - Joshua through Esther comprise the twelve *historical* books of the O.T.
 - Job through Song of Songs (or Song of Solomon) represent the five *poetic* books of the O.T.
 - Isaiah through Daniel we call the five *major prophets* of the Bible – *major* in the sense of the length of the book, not importance.
 - Hosea through Malachi are the twelve *minor prophets* – *minor* in terms of length, not importance.
- The New Testament (N.T.) spans from Jesus' birth to nearly the end of the first century A.D. The N.T. is laid out as follows:
 - Matthew through John are the four *Gospel*/accounts of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection.
 - Acts records the beginning and expansion of the church after Jesus' ascension to God the Father.

- Romans through Philemon are 13 letters written by the apostle Paul to various churches and followers of Christ.
- Hebrews through Revelation are nine letters written to early followers of Christ by other apostles including: James, Peter, Jude, and John.
- Now, looking at the Table of Contents, find the Gospel of John in the N.T. and turn there using the page numbers.
- Each book of the Bible has a numbered reference system that enables us to locate specific passages more easily. The numbering system contains chapters, which are further broken down into verses. For instance John 3:16 refers to the Gospel of John, chapter 3, verse 16. Go there now.
- Try looking up Romans 5:8 and Philippians 1:6.
- As you develop a regular habit of reading the Bible, you will become more and more familiar with navigating it. Meanwhile, use the Table of Contents and ask others for help. If your Bible has a concordance in the back of it, you can also look up passages using a key word.

Reading the Bible

- When you read the Bible, come to it with an attitude of expectancy in meeting with God!
 - Ask God to help you understand his Word.
 - Read the Bible with the intent to align your thoughts and lifestyle with God's design for you.
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John Project

1. Please read John's Gospel over the next week. (If you'd like to pace yourself, there are 21 chapters in John—three chapters a day for seven days will complete it.)
 2. Approach John's Gospel as an encounter with Jesus Christ. Pray each day before you read and ask him to reveal himself to you through his Word.
 3. Write down your most significant discoveries about Jesus as you met with him in John's Gospel. Please come prepared next week to share those with your partner.
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Week Two: Continue your life-coaching relationship

Please use the following questions and discussion points as you meet with your apprentice:

- What has God revealed about himself to you in John's Gospel?
 - What are some of your most significant discoveries about Jesus from John's Gospel?
 - What is the one primary response above all others that John's Gospel presses us toward with regard to Jesus? (It's the reason John says he wrote the Gospel, John 20:30-31. To believe in him, or put our trust in him.)
 - Share the Abiding Illustration with your apprentice. Take him/her to John 15:5 and spend time explaining the concept of abiding. Bring Galatians 5:22 into the discussion on "fruit". Ask him/her to look at the list of "fruit" and to tell you which one or ones address any issue that might be hindering a joy-filled life for him/her. Show him/her how he/she can produce this fruit through abiding!
 - Ask him/her to read through Galatians at least twice this week with a view to meeting with God. See the *Galatians Project*.
 - Ask him/her to memorize John 15:5 and to come prepared to quote it next week.
 - Pray for your apprentice during the week.
 - Contact your apprentice at least one other time during the week to stay in touch and to follow up on anything that you may need to.
 - Continue to model a life of being transformed by Christ before your apprentice and be alert for opportunities to unleash a bigger vision of God and courageously challenge him/her.
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Galatians Project

Read Galatians at least twice this week with a view to meeting with God. Please come prepared to share what God shows you from this letter.

1. Briefly describe Paul's primary reason for writing to the Galatians. (What main issue is he addressing? See Galatians 1:6-7; 2:16; 3:1-3.) Have you personally struggled with this issue? (If not, you no doubt will someday!)
 2. How do we combat the tendency to please God through human effort? (What does Paul give as the solution?)
 3. In what ways does God promise to equip you so that you can obey him?
 4. In what practical ways is God speaking to you from his Word in Galatians? (What does he want to change in you?)
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Week Three: Continue your life coaching relationship

- Quote John 15:5 for each other.
 - Go over the questions from the *Galatians Project* with each other. Make sure to treat this experience as an encounter with God and not merely an intellectual exercise! Look for opportunities to unleash a bigger vision of God for and courageously challenge him/her.
 - Briefly instruct your apprentice in how to win in prayer when praying with others. (Even if they are accustomed to praying with others, introduce these as guidelines for praying with each other.)
 - Prayer is simply conversation with God.
 - Pray vertically. Resist any tendency to pray horizontally. In other words, we are praying to God, not preaching at or teaching our listeners, nor are we trying to impress them.
 - Expect God to speak and to work!
 - Listen actively to God and others. Stay engaged.
 - Keep individual prayers short and focused on a single issue at a time.
 - Believe the best about each other. Reject negative thoughts.
 - Ask God for his presence, power, truth and protection.
 - Go over the *Psalms Project* with your apprentice. Explain to him/her what it means to meditate on Scripture. (Whereas Eastern religions use meditation as the *emptying* of the mind, biblical meditation is a *centering* of the mind on God.)
 - Ask him/her to select a verse from one of the Psalms to memorize for next week. Explain how memorizing aids us in meditating on God's Word.
 - Wrap up your meeting in a brief time of prayer.
 - Pray for your apprentice during the week. The next time you meet will be your last scheduled meeting. Pray about what next steps your apprentice could take to stay partnered with someone and to invest in others.
 - Contact your apprentice at least one other time during the week to stay in touch and to follow up on anything that you may need to.
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Psalms Project

1. Please read and meditate on the following selected Psalms: 8, 16, 25, 27, 32, 34, 46, 62, 63, 96, 100, 103, 139, 150. Then, answer the following questions for each Psalm. (Suggestion: Read two Psalms per day for the next week.)
 2. In what ways is God revealing himself to you in each Psalm?
 3. In order to trust God, we must think rightly about him. How does God's revelation of himself in these Psalms impact your ability to trust him?
 4. What key insight or action do these Psalms provide you with for nurturing your relationship with God and abiding with him?
 5. Select a favorite of these Psalms and pray it back to God as an expression of your own mind, will and emotions.
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Week Four: Continue your life-coaching relationship

- Ask your apprentice how he/she is doing with respect to abiding with Christ and coach him/her through any difficulties. Celebrate his/her personal victories!
 - Go over the Psalms project with your apprentice.
 - Quote your memorized Psalms verses for each other.
 - Explore next steps with your apprentice. Seek to lead him/her into next steps for spiritual partnership in a small group, a course, on a VIP team, or with another individual.
 - Pray with your apprentice.
 - Send your apprentice a card or note of encouragement in which you again unleash a bigger vision of God for them, courageously challenge them, and take any other actions appropriate for them. Thank them for spending time with you.
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Additional Role-Plays and Case Studies

Use these role-plays and case studies for additional practice in unleashing a vision of God for others and courageously challenging them toward spiritual transformation.

FRED

I'm a single guy in my late fifties. I've been divorced twice. I have two grown children by my first marriage. They are both single. My son lives in Florida and my daughter in New York, so I don't see them much any more. I had a good job and worked hard all my life so I was able to retire a couple of years ago. Materially, I have everything I need or want, but I have no one to share it with. My life is the pits!

I received Christ as my Savior when I was a kid, but I haven't been very active in my faith.

TINA

I'm a single mom with two small children. My husband abandoned us for another woman shortly after our youngest was born. I have a pretty good job, considering my training, or lack of it, but I still struggle even to make our rent and car payment, much less having funds left over for food and clothes for my kids. My oldest child is chronically ill, so I'm constantly missing work and spending money on doctors and medicine.

I received Christ as my Savior a couple of years ago and I'm trying to have faith in him and his care for me, but I don't know how much longer I can hang on like this!

TOM

My wife and I have been married for 10 years, but we haven't been intimate for the past 18 months. We have three children. Our middle child is really struggling in school with disciplinary issues and poor grades. We're in deep debt and I hate my job. My wife just got promoted, but her increase in pay is eaten up by what she spends on her wardrobe in her new management position.

My wife and I both came to Christ when we were young and we still make a show of it by going to church. But somehow our Christianity is just not relevant to our situation.

Debrief simulation

- What actions did you use to unleash a vision of God for this person?
 - In what ways was your partner's unleashing a vision of God effective in your life?
-

Additional Role-Plays and Case Studies (continued)

Use these role-plays and case studies for additional practice in unleashing a vision of God for others and courageously challenging them toward spiritual transformation.

KAREN

My husband and I have been married for 10 years, but we haven't been intimate for the past 18 months. We have three children. Our middle child is really struggling in school with disciplinary issues and poor grades. We're in deep debt and I hate the fact that I have to work outside the home. My husband just got promoted to a management position, but we're making less now than when he was hourly and could work overtime.

My husband and I both came to Christ when we were young and we still make a show of it by going to church. But somehow our Christianity is just not relevant to our situation.

GREG

My wife and I have been married for 12 years and she just found out about an affair I had six years ago. My wife is devastated. Our marriage is crashing in around us. I don't know whether it will survive. My kids look at me as though I were the scum of the earth.

I have been a Christian since I was 15, but it doesn't seem to have helped much!

ELAINE

I'm 47 years old. I received Christ as my Savior when I was 19. My walk with God has been filled with highs and lows ever since. There have been times for me of great elation in the Lord and other times when it seems that my prayers do not penetrate the heavens. I have also experienced extended periods of great loneliness. In these times, I find myself questioning how God can love me and whether I'm even saved.

Debrief simulation

- What actions did you use to unleash a vision of God for this person?
 - In what ways was your partner's unleashing a vision of God effective in your life?
-

Lifestyle Benchmarks – Instructions

1. Make seven copies of the Lifestyle Benchmark (LB). Obtain six legal size envelopes.
 2. On one of the LB's write "Self" and complete it on yourself. Please make sure you bring it to the third session.
 3. Write **your name** in the blank at the upper left on all six of the other LB's.
 4. Address all six envelopes to yourself and put postage on them.
 5. Within the next three days, distribute a Lifestyle Benchmark and a pre-addressed, stamped envelope to six people who know you. Try to include as wide a range of relationships as possible including your spouse, a child 12 years or older, co-workers, neighbors, and friends, etc. Include both male and female, saved and unsaved.
 6. **Important:** ask people NOT to write their names on the LB. This serves to preserve anonymity. The results of the LBs will be for your eyes only.
 7. The LB contains further instructions for those completing it on your behalf.
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Lifestyle Benchmark

_____ is participating in a leadership development program.

One of his/her projects is to ask several people that know him/her to complete this survey.

- Please answer the questions below by circling the most appropriate response.
- To ensure confidentiality, please DO NOT put your name on this survey.
- Please return this survey to ChangePoint within three days in the envelope provided.
- Please respond to the questions based on your knowledge and experience with this person.
- Leave a question blank only if you do not know this person well enough to respond accurately.

1. Even when no one is looking, this person strives to do his/her best while working on any task.

Disagree *Disagree somewhat* *Agree somewhat* *Agree*

2. If this person inadvertently walked out of a store with a candy bar without paying for it, but in the parking lot realized his/her error, he/she would go back into the store and pay for the candy bar.

Disagree *Disagree somewhat* *Agree somewhat* *Agree*

3. This individual would show compassion and respect if approached by a homeless person.

Disagree *Disagree somewhat* *Agree somewhat* *Agree*

4. Even if presented with blatant temptation, this person would maintain sexual purity and moral self-control when traveling away from home.

Disagree *Disagree somewhat* *Agree somewhat* *Agree*

5. This person is equally genuine in private as well as in public.

Disagree *Disagree somewhat* *Agree somewhat* *Agree*

6. This person usually exhibits a joy in life that transcends his/her circumstances.

Disagree *Disagree somewhat* *Agree somewhat* *Agree*

7. This person could help others wrestling with spiritual issues.

Disagree *Disagree somewhat* *Agree somewhat* *Agree*

8. This person would keep his/her cool if someone abruptly cut them off in traffic.

Disagree *Disagree somewhat* *Agree somewhat* *Agree*

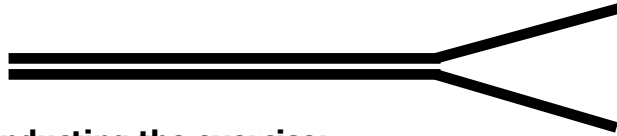
9. If this individual overheard a destructive rumor about another person, he/she would not spread this rumor to others.

Disagree *Disagree somewhat* *Agree somewhat* *Agree*

The Fire-Underwriter's Knot Exercise

Purpose: Demonstrate the difference between *caught* and *taught* in the context of modeling personal victory of life in Christ.

Supplies: You will need several 16" lengths of standard appliance electrical cord. Prepare these props by splitting the cord apart about four or five inches on one end of the cord. Leave the rubber insulation on the cord.



Setting up and conducting the exercise:

- Ask if anyone in the room knows how to tie a Fire-Underwriter's Knot. (You will want volunteers who do not know how to tie the knot.)
 - Ask for two volunteers and role-play the following with them:
 - Explain to them they are newly hired employees at Acme Appliance Co. and their first job will be tying Fire Underwriter's knots. Tell them you will teach them how to tie this knot.
 - Face the volunteers and quickly tie the knot but only show it to them fleetingly. Make an off-handed remark about it being a really simple knot to tie.
 - Then tell the volunteers that you have a meeting you've got to get to and only have a few minutes. Look distracted and hurried and simply read the instructions for tying the knot "to save time." (Hand each volunteer a cord and read attached instructions – version 1 – briskly and without pause. Do not pay attention to their struggles or discomfort.)
 - Ask them if they've got it. Ask them how they would feel about teaching someone else how to tie the knot.
 - Ask the class what you did wrong.
 - At this point, step out of character and diffuse any feeling of discomfort on the part of the volunteers not being able to tie the knot. Tell them that you had set them up for failure because of your approach. Explain that you tried to *teach* them something that is better *caught* than *taught*. In fact, let me demonstrate . . .
 - Now, with the same volunteers go through the following scenario:
 - Hi, my name is . . . Welcome to Acme Appliance Co.
 - In your new job here at Acme, you will be learning to tie the Fire Underwriter's Knot. Your job is one of the most important jobs in the plant.
-

To get you started on your new job I want to demonstrate for you how to tie a Fire Underwriter's Knot. Have either of you ever tied a Fire Underwriter's Knot? This knot is crucial because it prevents the cord from separating from the appliance.

What do you suppose might happen if the cord either partially or fully separated from the appliance? Separation could cause a short resulting in severe electrical shock, fire, or at the very least malfunction. So tying this knot correctly is one of the most important jobs at Acme.

- So let's tie the knot. Watch first as I slowly tie the knot for you. Don't try to tie it yet, simply observe what I do. (Tie it with the volunteers standing on either side of you with all of you facing the same direction.)
 - Now I'd like you to tie the knot, but we'll do it together. Please follow my instructions exactly and let me check your progress as we go. (Let them watch you as you tie your knot too.)
 - Take the split end of the cord in your hand. Place your thumb at the base of the split. Grab the right-hand strand and make a loop in front of the main strand, protruding about two inches to the left. Then take the left-hand strand and bring it around in front of the protruding tail of the right-hand strand, then to the back of it pushing it through the loop. Now pull both ends drawing the knot tightly to the base of the split.
 - Check to make sure both volunteers tie the knot correctly and give them feedback as they go to ensure they've got it. Encourage them along the way and give them praise for tying the knot properly. To ensure that they have it down, have them tie the knot with you once more, just like before.
 - Then ask them to undo their knots and have one of them show and tell the other how to tie the knot exactly like you did for them.
 - When they complete the knot successfully this third time, give them applause and thank them. (They can return to their seats.)
 - Ask the group why this second approach worked so much better. Ask them how this exercise applies to discipleship. (You just reproduced yourself and either of the two volunteers could train anyone else how to tie the knot.)
 - Discipleship (life-coaching) is like tying this knot. Discipleship is more caught than taught. We must model and demonstrate for them how to follow Jesus.
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Fire-Underwriter Knot Training (Version 1)

The Fire-Underwriter Knot is a simple knot designed to prevent separation of an appliance cord from its unit.

History

The National Board of Fire Underwriters was founded by fire insurance underwriters in 1866 to work for fire prevention and loss control. This board helped standardize fire insurance. The National Board of Fire Underwriters merged into the American Insurance Association in the mid-1960s. And in 1971, 30 national and regional rating bureaus merged to form the Insurance Services Office.³

The fire underwriter knot has been in use since before 1944. In 1944, the Training Within Industry Service (TWI) under the auspices of the War Manpower Commission (WMC) issued a curriculum featuring the fire underwriter knot. TWI employed the fire underwriter knot as practice for the skill of creating "job breakdowns." (I actually have a signed copy of the May 1944 letter signed by C. R. Dooley, then director of TWI, that accompanied that curriculum.)

However, here at Acme Appliance we utilize the fire underwriter knot for its originally intended purpose: to prevent the separation of an appliance cord from its electrical contacts.

Instructions

Take the split end of the cord in your hand. Place your thumb at the base of the split. Grab the right-hand strand and make a loop in front of the main strand, protruding about two inches to the left. Then take the left-hand strand and bring it around in front of the protruding tail of the right-hand strand, then to the back of it pushing it through the loop. Now pull both ends drawing the knot tightly to the base of the split.

Debrief for Version 1

- 1) (To the volunteers) How do you feel right now?
- 2) How effective was my approach at training these volunteers in how to tie the fire underwriter knot?
- 3) What characteristics of this approach do you recognize in our past attempts to disciple others?

³ Answers.com, "National Board of Fire Underwriters," 2008.

Conduct Version 2 of Fire Underwriter Knot Training

Debrief for Version 2

- 1) (To the volunteers) How do you feel right now? Why is it important how they feel?
 - 2) How effective was this second approach at training these volunteers in how to tie the fire underwriter knot?
 - 3) In essence what did I just do with these two volunteers?
 - 4) What characteristics of this second approach might we adopt for discipling others?
 - 5) What are some of the skills we want to model and coach for others to grow in Christ?
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Growing in God's Word Model – Mark 4:35-41 (NIV)

Jesus Calms the Storm

³⁵That day when evening came, he said to his disciples, "Let us go over to the other side."

³⁶Leaving the crowd behind, they took him along, just as he was, in the boat. There were also other boats with him. ³⁷A furious squall came up, and the waves broke over the boat, so that it was nearly swamped. ³⁸Jesus was in the stern, sleeping on a cushion. The disciples woke him and said to him, "Teacher, don't you care if we drown?"

³⁹He got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, "Quiet! Be still!" Then the wind died down and it was completely calm.

⁴⁰He said to his disciples, "Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?"

⁴¹They were terrified and asked each other, "Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!"

I. Explore God's revelation

- "That day"
- Jesus initiated the suggestion
- "other side" = of the lake (4:1)
- "just as he was" = Jesus was already in the boat (4:1)
- There were also other boats
- It was a furious squall or a fierce gale and waves were breaking over the boat threatening to swamp it
- Jesus is asleep in the stern
- The question, "Teacher, don't you care if we drown?" is not a request for a miracle, but agitation over his inaction. The disciples mistook Jesus' silence for apathy.
- He rebukes the wind and waves, and then rebukes the disciples
- They are more terrified of him than they were of the storm!

II. Meditate on God's revelation

- "Lord, You, who are all-knowing, and all-loving, asked your disciples to get into a boat knowing that they would encounter a serious storm." I suppose you lead me into the thick of a storm from time to time as well.
 - Your Word does not indicate whether you brought on this storm, but your Word does reveal that you used it to your advantage and for the good of your disciples.
 - God, I recognize from this story that even the most mundane decision, choice or action on my part may lead to a monumental experience with you. Therefore, I need to abide in you and trust you in all I do.
 - Lord, in situations when I am most anxious for a word or an action from you, you sometimes choose to be silent. I see that I need to trust in your presence to the extent that I am satisfied with you and trusting you, regardless of my circumstances and regardless of your response or apparent lack of response.
 - Wow! This miracle came about not as the result of faith on the part of the disciples, but lack of it! Lord, this is a situation in which great faith would have resulted in a resolute confidence in your character and ability. I want to trust you like that!
 - Lord, I recognize that like your disciples, my prayer to you is often not a prayer of faith, but an expression of my frustration and sometimes even mistrust of your actions.
 - Father, thank you that your response to our feeble faith is not punitive, but loving!
-

- Lord, what would have been a trusting (faith-full) response in this situation? (Role play: John, Andrew, Peter, etc.)

III. Align your life with God

- Lord, I'm struggling in a situation right now in which you are choosing to be silent. I accept this from you and I choose to be satisfied knowing you are with me, regardless of the current struggle or the outcome. (worship)
 - Lord, I recognize that I have been complaining about the storm, the wind and the waves breaking over me in my current situation. I confess my sin and acknowledge that you led me into this storm and that you are with me. And with you I am satisfied. (worship)
 - Lord, forgive me for presuming to know how you *should* work in this situation. I know that my frustration and anger have hindered my relationship with you. I confess this to you now and choose to rest with you. (worship)
 - Lord, my friend Glenn is going through a very difficult time right now. I pray that you would help him to recognize your presence and to trust you with childlike faith.
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