

# The Map Maker's Guide

## Map 4 - The Adventures of Our Life in Christ

### Spiritual Exercise

*Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice! Let your gentleness be known to all men. The Lord is at hand. Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:4-7*

During a particularly stressful time in my life (a time that included daily panic attacks), this passage became a recipe for peace and a weapon against the enemy. What Satan intended for evil, God turned to my good. Here's how it works (this prayer is written in a general way; be as specific as you can).

### Prayer

Father in Heaven, I rejoice in Your presence. I rejoice in the promise of Your protection and peace in this circumstance! I surrender to the expression of Your gentleness to everyone involved - even those that appear to be my enemies. I know You are with me in every trial and tribulation. By Your grace, I refuse to be anxious. Thank You for this opportunity to experience and prove Your love. I pray for Your protection and guidance in this situation. I will not be able to persevere without You. I desperately need You. I receive Your peace and I rest in Your protection, through Your Son; in whose name I pray. Amen.

### Introduction

*... for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure. Philippians 2:13*

*Do not fear, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Luke 12:32*

*Commit your way to the Lord,  
Trust also in Him,  
And He shall bring it to pass.  
He shall bring forth your righteousness as the light,  
And your justice as the noonday. Psalm 37:5-6*

Our God is a process oriented problem solver. All of His creation operates in process: From birth to death; from dead in sin to alive in Christ, from glory to glory, etc. Give Him a problem and He will give you a process to solve it. The Bible is His story - the grand process that He is orchestrating to get back what was lost to Him and mankind in the Garden of Eden (more on this later).

Most of the major topics of Scripture are process oriented. We are to continue and grow in some of them (e.g., faith, hope and love). Others are processes that God uses to mature us (e.g., tribulation, sanctification, transformation, and disciple-making). Even our salvation is a process; not a singular event.

Regrettably, we have become an event-focused people. "If it isn't happening now, it just isn't happening" is our motto. "What have you done for me today?", has become our measure.

This degraded perspective has affected our doctrine and our discipline. For example, we are more concerned with the event of a lost soul making a decision than with the processes of sanctification and discipleship. We give more attention to what we can squeeze out of God in 30-minute devotion events than we give to the life He wants to live in and through us every moment of the day.

Recognizing that God operates “in process” will dramatically change our perspective of the life we are to live in Christ. It will impact our relationship with God and with all of His creation. To encourage us in this new way of thinking - and to continue to prepare ourselves for the adventure that lies ahead - we will search out a few of the processes God has instituted for making us His people; on this Earth and in Heaven. We will discover that these processes are truly the adventures of our life in Christ.

## Definition

**Adventure:** An undertaking usually involving danger and unknown risks; the encountering of risks; an exciting or remarkable experience. *www.merriam-webster.com*

**Transformed (*metamorphōō*):** To change into another form; of Christ's transfiguration; of believers, the obligation being to undergo a complete change which, under the power of God, will find expression in character and conduct. *Vine's Expository Dictionary*

**Greek Verb Tenses:** For those that have a love of the truth, searching out the Scriptures can be a most exciting and rewarding treasure hunt. One way to better understand the meaning of a particular verse is to explore the verb tenses used. Here are a few that we will consider:

**Aorist Tense** - The aorist is a "simple occurrence" or "summary occurrence" - a completed event - most often translated into the English past tense (e.g., “Jesus wept.”).

**Present Tense** - The present tense denotes continuous or progressive action. It shows 'action in progress' or 'a state of persistence.' (e.g., “...reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.”).

**Future Tense** - The future tense corresponds to the English future, and indicates the certain or contemplated occurrence of an event which has not yet occurred (e.g., ... we shall be saved by His life.).

Verb tenses can be found using the tools provided in [www.blueletterbible.org](http://www.blueletterbible.org).

## Searching Out the Matter

*(All Scripture references, but those noted, are NKJV; Thomas Nelson, Inc.; footnotes excluded)*

### Transformation

As we learned in Map 1, to be transformation agents, Leaders in the Workplace must themselves be transformed. Following the discovery of the desire God has placed in our hearts for this season (Psalm 37:4), a period of transformation is necessary to prepare us for the good work associated with that desire (Matthew 5:16). This Biblical prescription for spiritual maturity is found in 2Corinthians 3:18.

*But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.*  
2Corinthians 3:18

As you can see in the following graphic, transformation is like climbing a mountain. It is a process that occurs as we behold the glory of Christ (in prayer and meditation, in Bible study, in other believers, etc.) and allow the Holy Spirit to transform us from one level of glory to another. This new level of glory is simply a condition where more of the glory that Christ has given us can be seen; and more of His character is getting out of us onto others.



It is interesting to note that the Greek word for transformed - *metamorphoo* - is only found in two other places in the New Testament. Another is in Paul's letter to the Romans:

*And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.* Romans 12:2

The transformation process involves the renewal of our minds, and a move away from conformity to the world. As we learned in Map 3, reckoning the truths of God for ourselves is one way that we can participate with the Holy Spirit's work. Beholding the glory of the Lord is another. In both cases, our transformation is evidenced by the increased manifestation of that glory.

Understanding God's intention in the transformation process may already be stretching your paradigm of the normal Christian life (that's a good thing). It may seem too fantastic to be possible; but, it doesn't stop there. Let's look at the third occurrence of *metamorphoo* - found in Matthew 17:

*Now after six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John his brother, led them up on a high mountain by themselves; and He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light.* Matthew 17:1-2

Do you see it? Jesus was *metamorphoo-ed* on the Mount of "*Metamorphoo*". Could this be possible for us? Well, I haven't seen too many Christians glowing like Jesus, but it has to make you think, "What's possible?" Perhaps God intends for us to have a greater impact on our surroundings. Consider the following:

*For we are to God the fragrance of Christ among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing.* 2Corinthians 2:15

Paul is not speaking of super Christians, but of every Christian who ministers out of the transformed life.

One of the most inspiring quotes I have ever read speaks volumes about the potential in those that will lay hold of the truth regarding our transformation:

*Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness that most frightens us. We ask ourselves, who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented, fabulous? Actually, who are you not to be? You are a child of God. Your playing small does not serve the world. There is nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won't feel insecure around you. We are all meant to shine, as children do. We were born to make manifest the glory of God that is within us. It's not just in some of us; it's in everyone. And as we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same. As we are liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others. Return to Love by Marianne Williamson, Harper Collins, 1992*

## Belief/Faith

We've covered the process of faith, as it relates to our reckoning of God's truth, in Map 3. So, just as a point of further edification, let's take a look at the most recognized verse in the Holy Bible.

*For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. John 3:16*

Many of us have learned that the believing of John 3:16 is a continual action - believe and keep on believing (a process). A Greek scholar once shared with me that the meaning goes even deeper. After years of study and meditation (he's 80 years old), he understands the verse to mean:

*For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever is believing into Him should not perish but is having everlasting life.*

Believing into Him... is having everlasting life. This is our progressive (and adventurous) life in Christ.

NOTE: "Belief" and "faith" are synonyms, translated from the Greek *pistis*. The Bible makes it clear that faith is a process that begins the most important event: Our initial belief in Jesus Christ.

## Salvation

Having come this far, it should be no surprise to learn that salvation is also a process. It has a beginning - justification; and it has an end - glorification. Many understand the middle part to be sanctification. This is not entirely correct. Sanctification is one of the processes of salvation, but it is not the process of salvation. Salvation, as you might expect, is much more.

**Salvation (*sōtēria*):** Deliverance, preservation, safety, salvation; deliverance from the molestation of enemies; in an ethical sense, that which concludes to the soul's safety or salvation (of Messianic salvation); salvation as the present possession of all true Christians; future salvation, the sum of benefits and blessings which the Christians, redeemed from all earthly ills, will enjoy after the visible return of Christ from heaven in the consummated and eternal kingdom of God.

*Outline of Biblical Usage, BlueLetterBible.org*

**Save (*sōzō*):** To save, keep safe and sound, to rescue from danger or destruction; to save one from injury or peril; to save a suffering one from perishing (i.e., one suffering from disease); to make well, heal, restore to health; to preserve one who is in danger of destruction, to save or rescue; to save in the technical biblical sense; to deliver from the penalties of the Messianic judgment; to save from the evils which obstruct the reception of the Messianic deliverance.

*Outline of Biblical Usage, BlueLetterBible.org*

As you can see, the definition of salvation describes a process - as do the verses below:

*For by grace you have been saved (perfect tense) through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God,<sup>9</sup> not of works, lest anyone should boast. Ephesians 2:8-9*

*For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved (present tense) it is the power of God. 1Corinthians 1:18*

*For we are to God the fragrance of Christ among those who are being saved (present tense) and among those who are perishing. 2Corinthians 2:15*

*Much more then, having now been justified (aorist tense) by His blood, we shall be saved (future tense) from wrath through Him. For if when we were enemies we were reconciled (*katallassō*; aorist tense) to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled (same), we shall be saved (future tense) by His life. Romans 5:9-11*

*But he who endures to the end shall be saved (future tense). Matthew 24:13*

As followers of Jesus Christ, we “have been saved”, we “are being saved” and we “shall be saved”. The implications of this are profound. For example, how do you answer the question: “When were you saved?”

It makes you think, doesn't it? That's exactly what the Lord is after - followers that will consider the truth. As we continue in this study, I pray that you will be challenged with many opportunities to consider the truth more deeply.

This perspective on salvation as a process is the perfect opportunity for you to practice what we have covered regarding our adventure into the mysteries of God (Map 2). Review that lesson to be sure you are searching out the matter safely; and you are exercising the five keys to receiving and entering into the truth.

To close out this topic, we should praise God that salvation is a process - because it is a process where God is doing the greatest thing He has ever done for man; and not just in a moment, but in the full length and breadth of our lives. He is continuously and progressively saving us!!

## **Sanctification**

As mentioned earlier, sanctification is one of the processes of our salvation, but not the only one. As a distinct process, it is (in a sense) less than salvation. However, fully understood, sanctification can be appreciated - and therefore appropriated - as a process of God that is much more than we might think or imagine. Consider these definitions:

**Sanctification (*hagiasmos*):** Separation to God; and, the course of life befitting those so separated; from the root *hagiazō*. *Vines Expository Dictionary*

**Sanctify (*hagiazō*):** To render or acknowledge, or to be venerable or hallow; to separate from profane things and dedicate to God (consecrate things to God, dedicate people to God); to purify (to cleanse externally; to purify by expiation: free from the guilt of sin; to purify internally by renewing of the soul). *Outline of Biblical Usage, BlueLetterBible.org*

Vine's additionally points out that "to sanctify" is used of:

- (a) the consecration of the Son by the Father (John 10:36);
- (b) the Lord Jesus devoting Himself to the redemption of His people (John 17:19);
- (c) the setting apart of the believer for God (Acts 20:32);
- (d) the effect of the Death of Christ on the believer (Hebrews 10:10);
- (e) separation of the believer from the world - by the Father through the Word (John 17:17, 19);
- (f) the believer who turns from such things as dishonor God and His gospel (2Timothy 2:21).

From these definitions, we come to understand that sanctification is the setting apart (or preparation) of things and people intended for God's use (or presence). The important thing here is that it is about God more than it is about us. It reminds me of two admonitions:

*And I heard another voice from heaven saying, "Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues. Revelation 18:4*

*And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, "Be saved from this perverse generation." Acts 2:40*

In this evil day, we would do well to heed these admonitions; to be set apart for our appearance in the presence of God, and for His intended use of us as His instruments. In so doing, we hasten the day of the Lord's return.

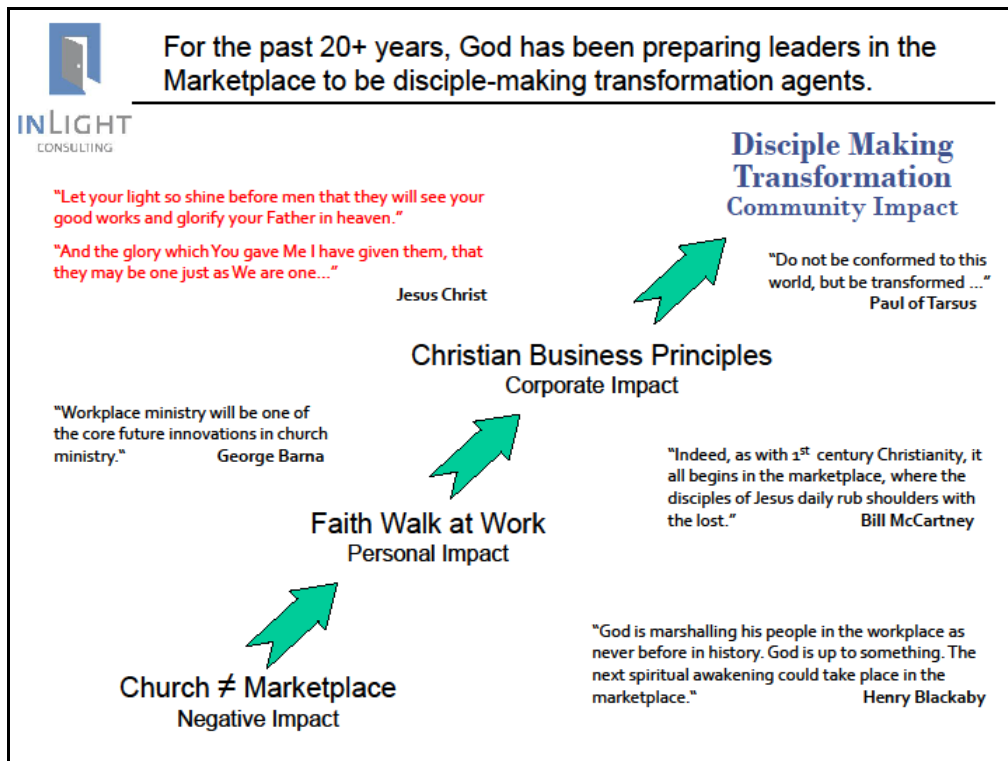
*Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready. And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. Revelation 19:7-8*

There is a grand and glorious day when the Bride has made herself ready - set apart, transformed and purified - to co-reign with the King of kings and Lord of lords. It is the Father's desire, the Son's passion, and the Holy Spirit's work that we would - through surrender, sacrifice and submission - make ourselves ready for His return.

The process of sanctification is immensely important in every area of our lives - particularly in the area where we spend most of our waking hours.

## Sanctification in the Workplace

Undoubtedly, Leaders in the Workplace have become the spiritual leaders of our communities... across all spheres of society. As go the leaders, so goes the Workplace; and so goes our communities. Right or wrong, this is reality in post-Christian America.



Wherever you place yourself on this maturity scale, there is always opportunity to be more impactful for God's kingdom. That is the vision of this study. It is the purpose of our being transformed from glory to glory into the very image of Christ. It should be a comfort to know that God is the Manager of the processes that will mature us into disciple making transformation agents.

## Conclusion

For more than 20 years, God has been transforming the hearts and minds of Leaders in the Workplace and sovereignly raising them up within strategic spheres of influence. This is not the first time in American history that God has been merciful and gracious to His people through Leaders in the Workplace. Revivals have been birth from business prayer lunches.

Now is the time for Christian Leaders in the Workplace to ask themselves some important questions: How are we leading? Timidly, or boldly? In assurance of our faith, or with doubt and double-mindedness? With purity of heart, or with a greyish hypocrisy?

Remember, God is a process oriented problem solver; and there is no problem that He cannot solve. As we see in Paul's prayer for the Ephesians, God will move powerfully on your behalf - beginning with the work He is doing in you. Consider the following for yourself.

*Therefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers: that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling (His purpose), what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints (your assignment), and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe (His power), according to the working of His mighty power (His plan)... Ephesians 1:15-19*

If we are to join Him in the work, we must do things His way. His ways are active, continuous and progressive. His Son is making us. The Holy Spirit is transforming us. These processes are truly the adventures of our life in Christ.

## Application

It is really quite simple (though not necessarily easy): As Leaders in the Workplace, we are called to lead those within our spheres of influence into and through the processes God has established for our growth as the Body of Christ. We must recognize that these are processes that take time and attention. We must fight the temptation to be event oriented in our responsibilities to the Master. We must encourage, edify and equip others to do the same.

As Jesus said, "Go and make disciples..."

## Reckoning

God is working in us to will and do to His good pleasure (Philippians 2:13).

## Assignment

1. Review the Bible passages for this week. Study and meditate on those that may have challenged your understanding. Ask the Lord to give meaning to them for you. Share this with someone in your spheres of influence.
2. The Greek word for transformed (2 Corinthians 3:18) and transfigured (Matthew 17:2) are the same. What does this tell you about God's purpose for your life?
3. Ask God to reveal the fears that are prohibiting your transformation and service to Him. Ask Him to reveal the lies behind those fears, and the truths that you can use against them. Lastly, deal with each lie and the fear will fly. Adventure without fear is all excitement.

## Devotion

### Finding Joyful, Spirit-filled Ministry

From Rob Streetman, The inLight Adventure Blog



The Lord desires that every Marketplace Leader find joyful, Spirit-filled ministry in every area of their life - work, home, church, etc. It is important to note that this includes their ministry in the workplace. This is, after all, the place where they spend the largest portion of their waking hours.

The first step in the journey towards joyful, Spirit-filled ministry is discovering the desire God has placed in your heart for this season of your life (Psalm 37:4). As you surrender to that desire, it becomes a purpose of God that will not be denied Him (Job 42:2).

God has the perfect plan for accomplishing His purpose. That plan is a true adventure. It is complex (by human standards) and involves many other individuals. It is an orchestration in the fullest sense. It's best left to Him; and it's okay not to know the whole plan. God does, however, reveal enough of His plan to allow a counting of the cost. This is one of Christ's commands (Luke 14:28).

In counting the cost, we find that God's plan will require a sacrifice. Sacrificing for His plan is the second step of the journey. As Christ said, "And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple." (Luke 14:27) Following Christ requires that the Marketplace Leader take the same road. This is the most decisive moment in the journey - The Marketplace Leader must ask himself, "Will I trust Him enough to agree to sacrifice for a plan I don't understand and cannot control?"

In step three, the Marketplace Leader submits to the power of the Holy Spirit - to work out what doesn't belong and to work in all that is needed for the supernatural work He will do in and through the Leader. Like going through boot camp, the old man is torn down that the Leader might be built up into the image of Christ.

Finally, the Marketplace Leader is prepared to let their light so shine before men that they will see their good work and glorify their Father in Heaven (Matthew 5:16). It is important to note that the "your" in this verse is plural. There are no lone rangers in God's economy. God gives the Marketplace Leader influence for the purpose of discipling others through the process and into the work - a work of unity for His glory.