

Ground Zero

Ground Zero is an experiential process that creates a universally verifiable, self-awareness of self-power in all those who have a minimum level of self-reflection. Once aware, each person can claim that self-power and take up responsibility for who they are and in achieving who they want to become through the engineering of their own thoughts.

Ground Zero makes children, teens and adults alike aware of their self-power. Amazingly, without any significant adaptations to the basic exercises in Ground Zero, children in second grade to professionals in Wall Street corporations have been made aware of their self-power. "Yes, you can; you just experienced that you can."

Awareness of Self-Power is the Ground Zero
of Leadership Potential and Character Development

Hi Coach,

before you do anything, have the participant open the LTH Workbook and put their name in the underlined blank on the first page.

Tell them that this ultimately is their workbook as they will be the one's who will customize it according to their experiences. And you can say something to the effect that "Your customizing is vital in this learning process and it will be a resource for you not only during the training but for years to come."

Edward [11/7/14]

Hi Coach,

If you are a LTH certified coach, you have a lot of tools and useful knowledge. But as you have learned, LTH is not about imparting just knowledge. As a LTH coach, you know that habit change is the hallmark your work. As a coach you are most interested in good outcomes and good outcomes are measured by participants acquiring skills in defined LTH areas that allow them to achieve their life vision and live by their core values with greater consistency.

You know about LTH habit change because you have acquired LTH habits that have changed your life the better. In fact, that is why you were selected to become a certified coach.

Keep that before your mind. You are a LTH coach. You will help participants articulate their life vision and core values and you will teach them skills on how to best achieve their goals. If those LTH skills become their habits, the participant will have profited to the maximum extent from this program.

Remember: There are no quick fixes. Be patient, stay on the path of real habit change; it will transform the lives of the participants.

Thank you for the heart to want to help other people succeed in life.

Edward [1/26/15]

Coach's Mental Framework

The real challenge in teaching this skill is to be aware of what it is that you are doing and what is happening within the participants.

You are utilizing a series of highly engineered, Interpretive Thought games / story lines to create a specific set of experiences in the participant. Upon reflection of those games and story lines, the participant will become far more self-aware than they were before. In other words, if the participants get into the games and story lines, they will become more **aware** of their self-power over their movement, their actions, their verbal, facial and body communication* and their thoughts. Regarding their thoughts, they will learn that they cannot stop thoughts from “popping up” in their minds, but they can choose to focus only on those thoughts that agree with their core values and life vision. Easier said than done. But the “doing” is what LTH is all about.

Note 1. Sometimes a participant might not get into the games. That is why you must make an effort to keep them wanting to play the games. For example, you can say: “You will learn what most of the people in the world will never know about themselves and others.”

What to make sure that you do not do. Do not tell them what the meaning of any game is until you have completed all three games. They are intricately woven and make part of one whole.

Note 2: It is the participant's experience that counts. Their experiences in the exercises are the basis for the reflections. Now that the exercises (the games) and the reflections are online for Ground Zero, you can use that instead of teaching it directly yourself.

* **Facial Expressions and Body Language:** Facial expressions and body language are often outside of our awareness. We are referring to the intentional use of body language and facial expressions to convey a message.

Summary of the Problem: Without awareness of one's self-talk, habit change is impossible.

Summary of the Solution: In the process of these games, you will help the participants become radically more self-aware than ever before in their lives that they are 100% responsible for their lives going forward.

Homework: In the context of habit change, it is vital to give them homework to monitor their self-talk in a notebook or via an electronic device and then go over that at your next coaching session.

Coach to Review Both Before and After Teaching Ground Zero

The Purpose of the three games in Ground Zero is to create self-awareness of one's interpretive Thoughts and then to demonstrate that the participant is 100% responsible for their life: for where they are and what they are doing, for what they communicate (by word, facial expression or body language) and for what thoughts they are allowing to guide them at any given moment.

Your work is part of a process—a multi-months process—to increase their awareness of their self-power and learn skills to have mastery (1) over their movement and, therefore, where they are and what they are doing, (2) over their words, body language and facial expressions, (3) over their thoughts; that is to learn how to become aware of the thoughts that enter into their minds and to accept or reject or modify them according to their Core Values and their Life Vision or purpose in life.

Summary: The coach's task is to have the participants discover their self-power through the games and self-reflection. You are not to tell them that. Through guided reflections on the games, you will help the participants realize that they themselves have extensive self-power and are therefore 100% responsible for all their daily life choices.

When the games are over and you have reflected on the significance of those games, you will be able to say to them and they will understand: (1) You are the gatekeeper of your words, body language and facial expressions. (2) You are the pilot of your whereabouts and your actions at all times and places. (3) You are the ultimate judge of all your thoughts.

Christian Coaches: Before teaching Ground Zero in Christ

Begin the coaching session with prayer and the selected Scripture text on the next page of the Coach's Manual. Have the participant(s) share what they hear God saying to them. Also have them place their names in the blank space. [Have them download **The Ground Zero INTRO Scripture Text** or forward a PDF copy to them before you begin.]

Coach, you begin by reading the text and placing your name in the blank. Then have the other(s) reread the text and place their names in the blank. After a third person reads (counting yourself), ask for a time of silence for each person to hear God speaking to them as they silently place their names in the blank spaces. Afterwards, you go first with your take away.

When the other(s) has finished their "take aways" close with prayer. You pray first, then the other(s). If there are more than three participants, choose only two others to pray. After this faith-filled beginning, have the participant(s) do the exercises and listen to the reflections.

Do not add any other truth from divine revelation during these exercises. **Why?**

Because you want the participants **to experience directly** the powers that God gives each person. Then, based on that experience, they can be led to realize that they are 100% responsible for wherever they are and for whatever they are doing and for whatever they say and for whatever thoughts they allow to nest in their minds and to guide them.

The experience in the upcoming exercises is vital as the dominant culture today teaches:

- (1) that we are but *cogs in a machine*—hence, without power or responsibility,
- (2) that we are *victims of our feelings*—hence, without power and responsibility and
- (3) that we can *just do whatever feels good*—hence, without any ethical or social standards.

If we are not responsible for anything, repentance is meaningless, as we have done nothing wrong. And if what "feels good" is "the good" to do, the gospel is devoid of its meaning.

Our Christian role in Ground Zero is like Nathan's. He first told King David a story. Only after the story did David realize it was all about him and his sin. He became aware and then he repented. [2 Samuel 12: 1-14] That is our role. Tell the story and hope they do as David did in Psalm 51. David humbly, sorrowfully and prayerfully reflects on his great sin, which God forgave David because of David's repentant heart.

As our role at this point is to be like Nathan, this is not the moment to speak about Christ, the Holy Spirit, sin, repentance and being called to be like Christ. Be patient! If the Spirit is with you, you will soon see it all come together powerfully and effectively for the building up of God's kingdom on earth as it is in heaven.

Summary: The Christian coach's task right now is to have the participants discover their being 100% responsible for their choices by doing the exercises and guiding them through the Reflection Section in this Coach's Manual or by using the online video Reflection Section.

The First Ground Zero Scripture Text: Seek Wisdom

_____, seek wisdom, incline your heart to understanding. Yes, if you seek insight and understanding, raise your voice. If you seek wisdom like silver, like a hidden treasure, and if you search her out, then you, _____, will understand her and know the fear of the LORD; the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. For the LORD gives wisdom, from his mouth come knowledge and understanding. God has success in store for the upright, is the shield of those who walk honestly, guards the paths of the just and protects the way of his faithful ones. If you, _____, seek wisdom and fear the Lord, then you will understand what is right and just, what is fair, and what is a good path to follow. If you seek wisdom and fear the Lord, wisdom will enter your heart, knowledge will be at home in your soul, directions will watch over you, understanding will guard you. [Proverbs 2:2-11]

GROUND ZERO

Awareness of your Self-Power

A path to healthy leadership in partnership

If you like playing games and if you play the games we are about to begin with an open mind, you will become more self-aware than over 99% of people alive today.

In other words, to become more self-aware than most people on the planet, you need only (1) a good spirit, (2) an imagination and (3) a willingness to let yourself get into the processes. Are you ready to begin?

Pause slightly and await their answer, which could be a nod or verbal; **then continue by saying:**

Let The Games Begin: Game 1, The Arm Game

Note 1: If you are in a group where one or more participants might be movement challenged in any way, be sensitive. Adapt the examples to the group.

Lift your right arm.
Lower your right arm.
Lift your left arm.
Lower your left arm.
Lift your right arm.
At ease

Pause slightly, **then continue by saying:**

Now do the opposite of what I tell you until I say *end of the oppositional exercise*.
Are you ready?

Pause slightly, then **continue by saying**

Lower your right arm.
Lift your right arm.
Lower your left arm.
End of Oppositional Exercise.
At ease

Pause slightly, then continue.

Let us do another part of this exercise. It is called:

"MAKE AN ARM MOVEMENT DECISION"

I want you to make a decision, but do not carry it out.

First, you decide what you want to do.

Here are your four options:

1. Raise both arms.
2. Raise one arm.
3. Leave both arms where they are.
4. Stand up, and then sit down immediately.

Have you made your decision?

Carry out your decision now.

Give them time to carry out the decision; then, continue by saying:

At ease ...

Pause for a moment and, then, continue by saying:

Are you ready for the next Game? Game 2:

Pause slightly and await their answer, which could be a nod or verbal; then, continue by saying:

Let the Games Go on: Game 2, The Butterfly Game

When I give the command, I want you to say the word, *BUTTERFLY*

Pause

READY?

1. Say, "BUTTERFLY!"

Pause, allow them time to say "butterfly."

[If some do not participate, say something like: "Come on now; it is just a game. It is a safe game. Please say, 'Butterfly'." But do not force them or embarrass them.

2. Now put all your feelings, tone of voice, body language and facial expressions into these set of words as you interpret them.

Act out each word set so the participants can model you. For example, pretend that you are sweating as you say "warm butterfly" or that your are shivering when you say "cold butterfly."

warm butterfly

Act it out for them, then say:

Now, you say, "warm butterfly."

Pause and have them say "warm butterfly" and have them act it out.

After they say "warm butterfly," go on to the next word and repeat the same process for each successive word.

cold butterfly

Pause and let them say it and act it out.

powerful butterfly

Pause and let them say it and act it out.

weak butterfly

Pause and let them say it and act it out.

mean, cruel, butterfly

Pause and let them say it and act it out.

kind butterfly

Pause

3. Now freeze me out; say nothing, provide no body language, give no facial expressions, regarding these set of words. And I am going to try to trick or to cajole you into speaking. Are you ready?

Pause: If they respond, you can use the moment to note—with kindness—that they were supposed to freeze you out. "So are your really ready?" PAUSE.

Let's go: Say "warm butterfly." I said, "say warm butterfly!"

Pause. Note: Try to bait them into saying "warm butterfly." If someone does mistakenly say, "warm butterfly," REMIND THEM: "You are to freeze me out. You are to act as if I do not exist." Then, continue on with the other words, but do not try to bait them again. Just say the word and then pause for a few seconds.

Say, "cold butterfly."

pause for a few seconds

Say "powerful butterfly."

pause for a few seconds

Say, "weak butterfly."

pause for a few seconds

End of the Freeze me out exercise.

4. Now say the opposite of what I say.
"warm butterfly"

They should say "cold" butterfly." Then have them do the same for each word below. Leave time for them to respond after you say each word.

cold butterfly,
powerful butterfly,
weak butterfly.

Good, you have completed the second game.

Are you ready for Game 3?

The Last Game, Game 3: The IMAGE Game

Are you ready to play the last game, The Image Game? If you play this game with a good spirit and curiosity, you will gain deeper insight into the ground zero of your self-power than almost all people in the world today. In fact, few people in their entire lives will ever become this aware. Are you ready?

Let the Image Game Begin!!

Ask the following questions:

Have you ever heard of Walt Disney and Disneyland?

Pause slightly and look for a "nodding yes." Continue by saying:

Do you know any Disney characters?

Pause slightly and look for a "nodding yes." Continue by saying:

Have you ever heard of Donald Duck?

Pause slightly and look for a "nodding yes." Continue by saying:

Have you an image of Donald Duck in your head now?

Pause slightly and look for a “nodding yes.” Continue by saying:

What color is Donald Duck in your imagination?

Await their answer or solicit their answer. Then, give the following Instruction:

Paint him GREEN! Were you able to paint him green in your imagination?

Await their answer or solicit their answer. Then, give the following Instruction:

Paint him white again! Is he white again?

Await their answer or solicit their answer. Then, give the following Instruction:

Make him shrink! Were you able to shrink him in your imagination?

Await their answer or solicit their answer. Then, give the following Instruction:

Make him grow! Were you able to make him grow in your imagination?

Await their answer or solicit their answer. Then, give the following Instruction:

Return to the original Donald Duck with the Orange Beak. Do you see him?

Await their nod!

The Pink Elephant Thoughts Modality

Coach’s Instructions: Go over the next few sentences before you teach. You are telling them **not to think about something** while you continually create images—by talking—of what you just told them not to think about. They will likely fail. That is good.

Experiencing how hard it is **not** to think about something when someone or something is constantly pushing those thoughts toward you is vital going forward. This is an important experience in learning about the limits of one’s self-power over thoughts that pop into one’s mind. It lays the basis for becoming aware of thought popping in our minds and guiding us without our conscious consent. In the next mini exercise, they will learn one active exercise they can do to move their thoughts in the direction they want their thoughts to go. Continue by saying:

Now, please follow closely this next instruction.

Do not imagine seeing Donald Duck in your mind. **Do not** see him with his three nephews walking by the seashore. **Do not** imagine seeing Huey, Dewey and Louis playing in the white sand and diving into the breaking waves near the shore.

Pause for a moment; then continue by saying:

Is that not difficult to try not to see Donald Duck and his nephews when someone else keeps talking about them?

Leave a moment of silence, but do not solicit an answer. If some one responds that it was hard, just respond. "It sure is." Pause, then go on and continue by saying:

Now I want you to imagine a big Pink Elephant walking down a street. I want you to imagine seeing that Pink Elephant walk into a huge, brightly lit bank. Now I want you to imagine that the Pink Elephant is talking to the bank teller. Hear the Pink Elephant telling the bank teller:

Change your voice and continue by saying:

"I would like to open a bank account."

Change your voice back to normal and continue by saying:

Imagine that the teller thinks nothing of the fact that the request is coming from a Pink elephant and simply begins a conversation about opening an account. Imagine them discussing the reasons for the account. Then, see the Pink Elephant signing the documents and leaving the bank. Now keep going over this story in your mind and keep seeing the Pink Elephant and add any detail that you want in your imagination movie.

As you do this, I am going to try to distract you, but you keep thinking about that Pink Elephant story. And no matter what I say or tell you to do, keep seeing that Pink Elephant story happening over and over again before your eyes. Are you ready?

Await their answer or solicit their answer. Lower you voice a little as you go on and say:

See Donald Duck in your mind. **See** him with his three nephews walking by the seashore. **See** Huey, Dewey and Louis playing in the white sand and diving into the breaking waves near the sandy shore.

At ease! That is the end of Pink Elephant Exercise!

Now, I have a question: Did you manage to keep to your Pink Elephant story before your eyes? Did you manage to block out Donald Duck and not see him at all?

Await or solicit their answers. Have a mini sharing for a few minutes and then go on.

Ok. That is the end of the last game of self-power. And now you are more aware than 99% of the people of the world about self-power.

Long Pause: It is most likely that they have not understood anything about their self-power from the games. Therefore, you go on to say.

In truth, I believe it is unlikely that you are more aware of your self-power because awareness comes through self-reflection and we have not done that yet.

So let us now reflect on what you have just done so that you might discover your self-power and discover just how much power you really have and become more aware than most people in the world.

Pause, **and then continue by saying:**

Would you like to do that?

Await their response or nod and then go on to the next page.

Since you would like to do that, let us now reflect together.

Reflection I: The Arm Game

I gave an instruction for you regarding your arms and YOU understood the instruction.

Pause slightly and give them a moment to ponder. Continue by saying:

However, even if you had understood but did not consent to that command, your arm would not have followed my instructions.

Pause slightly and give them a moment to think. Continue by saying:

But, you did consent and **you** basically told **your** arm to move up or down and your arm went up or down according to YOUR will, not mine. Is it not true that **you** moved **your** arm and not me?

Pause slightly and look for a "nodding yes." Continue by saying:

Anytime you want, you can command to act FOR OR AGAINST my instructions and YOU WILL OBEY YOU AND NOT ME. Is that not how we all operate under normal circumstances?

Pause slightly, then continue by saying:

Ultimately, therefore, YOU, have the power to raise or lower your arm. You command; your arm obeys. Is that not true?

Pause slightly and allow them to ponder for a few seconds, and then continue by saying.

YOU HAVE THE POWER OVER YOU!!! You command; IT HAPPENS!!

Pause slightly and state the following conclusion slowly:

We can therefore conclude with some certainty that, under normal circumstances, you are the pilot of your movement.

PLAY IT OUT = Point to the parts of the body as you read the next sentence. Touch the limb in question as you speak. Continue by saying:

You are the PILOT of your limbs, the master conductor of **your** arms, legs, shoulders, hands, feet, and neck. YOU HAVE THE POWER OVER YOUR MOVEMENT! You command and your limbs move or don't move. For example, you decided that you would be here today and your various limbs followed your orders to get you here.

As the PILOT of your movement, YOU are always responsible for **Wherever You Are** at any given moment and for **Whatever You Are Doing** in that moment. Is that not correct?

Note 1: If a participant plays to "exceptionality," simply state that you already said that you are referring to "**under normal circumstances.**" And go on to state, "When someone is surprised—for example by an attacking dog—there are reactions meant for our survival. Under normal circumstance, we cannot nor should we want to override them. Nevertheless, even in these situations, it is possible for people to train themselves and use the fear stimulus to trigger their training to master attacking dogs.

REFLECTION II: THE BUTTERFLY GAME.

Because I gave an instruction about the word, butterfly, and because you understood that instruction and because you consented to that instruction, you said "butterfly" with a certain tone of voice, body language and facial expression, or you froze me out, or you said the opposite. If you had chosen not to follow my instructions none of that would have happened. Is that not true?

Pause slightly and look for a "nodding yes." Continue by saying:

The point is that ultimately YOU, not I, have the power over your words, your facial expressions, your tonality of voice and your body language. YOU, not I, ultimately decide if you are going to freeze another person out. You can decide—even without words—to send powerful messages.

Act out the following and as you do say to them:

You can wink, / roll your eyes, shrug your shoulders / nod your head, contort your face in anger / in sadness / in disgust. And, of course, you can choose to speak softly or loudly, quickly or slowly, or ... not at all.

Pause slightly and then state the following conclusion slowly:

We can, therefore, conclude with some certainty that, under normal circumstances, you are the “Gatekeeper,” the Gatekeeper of the words that exit from your mouth the Gatekeeper of the tone of your voice and the Gatekeeper of your facial and body language. Therefore, **under normal circumstances**, you are always responsible for whatever you communicate, or decide not to communicate. Is that not true?

Await a nod or an answer and **then continue by saying.**

YOU, not I, have the power over how you express yourself. Do you agree?

Note: If a participant begins to state that “there are exceptions,” reply with kindness and thank him for underlining that, as you too have already said, you are referring to **“under normal circumstances”** and you do not want that to be forgotten. You know that there are exceptions, but normally there are not really any good excuses.

REFLECTION III: THE IMAGE GAME

In the third game, The Image Game, you noticed that, even under normal circumstances, you can change the image in your mind. That is what you did with the Donald Duck and the Pink Elephant exercise.

However, you also noticed how hard that is to change the images and thoughts in your mind when the images and thoughts keep coming at you. Yet, you did experience that with focused mental effort, you could, to some degree or another, replace Donald Duck with the Pink Elephant. And that was easier if you really were actively seeing the story line of the Pink Elephant. When your mind was actively engaged to focus on the Pink Elephant, you were more successful.

Pause slightly and look for a “nodding yes,” then, continue by saying:

In other words, you can decide which of the thoughts that enter your mind you are going to focus upon. You experienced that while that can be difficult; you can decide

which thoughts you want to focus on. In other words, under normal circumstances and with a good awareness and effort, you are the final judge of the thoughts that you will allow to guide you. Is that not true?

Pause slightly and await their nod or verbal response, **then, continue by saying:**

Granted you do not have the power to keep all thoughts from popping into your head. We experience that every day. In fact, it has been stated that we say to ourselves from about 6,000 to 20,000 words a day. Whatever the number, we are not fully aware of most of them. That can become tragic if we are not aware of those thoughts that actually guide us in making important decisions every hour of the day.

Nevertheless, our work is to show you that once you are aware of them, you clearly have the power to decide if you want to claim that thought as your own, modify it, reject it as against your own best interest, or simply think about something else.

Pause slightly and give them a moment to think, then, **continue by saying:**

Let me ask you this final question. If a total stranger were to overhear your conversation and butt in and tell you to change your thinking and follow just follow his, would you just follow his opinion about life and what is best for you and what is not good for you? Would you let a total stranger do that?

Pause slightly, give them a moment to respond, and then, continue by saying:

So, the question is: If you will not let just anyone tell you how to think, why would you let "a thought" that just pops into your mind, tell you what to think or to do?

Pause slightly, give them a moment to think, and then, continue by saying:

You have a right to your values and thoughts. No thought that just pops in your head has any rights. Reject it or ignore it if that **just popping in thought** or that **continually visiting thought** is contrary to your values.

What about when a boss asks you to do something and you disagree with his or her reason for doing it. Well, even if you had to comply with the action required, you could still think what you think is right in your mind. Is that not true? So not even your boss can get you to think his or her way even though she or he can get you to comply. **Your right to be the ruler over your thinking is always yours.**

Pause and let them think for a second. Then ask the following question:

But sometimes you do that. Don't you?

Pause and let them think for a second. Then ask the following question:

Why would you do that? Why do you give an “unexamined thought” that just popped into your mind the power to tell you what to do or think in that moment?

Pause and let them think for a second. Then ask the following question:

Did you not just play The Image Game in which you demonstrated your power to modify the images associated with a thought? Did you not make Donald Duck bigger or smaller, paint him white or green?

Pause and let them think for a second. Then make the following statement:

Granted, it is sometimes hard to get rid of a thought even if you command it to disappear. Sometimes that only reinforces the thought. However, you saw that you could start to think of something else, like the Pink Elephant. You could think about your favorite vacation and see yourself there and all other thoughts just vanished.

Pause and let them think for a second. Then make the following statement:

CLEARLY, in one way or another, you do have the ultimate power to decide if you want to let a particular thought guide you. You have the power to reject or modify a thought. If you judge THE THOUGHT as not being in your own best interest, you have power over it in many ways. We can therefore conclude with some certainty that, under normal circumstances, you are the judge, the Supreme Court judge of your thoughts.

PAUSE and then PLAY OUT the following = Act as you read.

See yourself sitting down on the judge’s bench.

Sit down.

See yourself taking notes of the thoughts in your mind.

Take out a pad and pretend to write.

Now imagine yourself evaluating the thoughts. See yourself pondering and taking notes. Maybe the thought needs to be modified a little or a lot. Maybe the thought needs to be rejected; maybe the thought needs to be replaced by another thought. See yourself pondering and then deciding. Can you see yourself doing that? Your decision is the only one that matters. **YOU ARE THE SUPREME COURT JUDGE OF YOUR THOUGHTS. Think about that for ten seconds!**

Let them think for about that for ten seconds. TIME IT. Then say:

Of course, in the future, and perhaps based on more accurate information, you can decide to reverse or modify your decision. Moreover, you can even decide to investigate the origin of the thoughts you judge. You might find that you got your thoughts from your parents, a friend, the study of history, from your sacred scripture, a movie, or a

song, from a teacher, a poem, or a quote. But ultimately, today, you are the judge of that thought and you decide what value that thought will have on your life.

YOU ARE THE FINAL JUDGE OVER YOUR THOUGHTS

Now let us go to the workbook and on page 11. Draw and color in the boxes according to the instruction there. Use the colors and draw or scribble or make stick figure that best represents what you have learned about each of the three powers that you have. The power of the **Gatekeeper** over your communication. The power of the **Pilot** over your movement; The power of the **Supreme Court Judge** over your thoughts That is the Ground ZERO of Self-Power.

Give them a few minutes, a real, few minutes. Do not talk during that time except to answer questions like: **Question:** "I can't draw." **Answer:** "Most people cannot, but stick figures and simple lines and curves and scribbled colors or whatever is also fine. **Note:** Some "artists" will have to be asked to go back and finish their work of art later. When most people have finished—or you judge that enough time has passed—**say something to the effect:**

Whoever needs to, can continue drawing. Now, LET US READ PAGE 11 TOGETHER.

If there are many participants, choose three different people and have each read one of the sections. When done reading, continue by saying:

_____, would you please share your drawings and one thing that you take away from this exercise.

When as many people as time allows have shared, continue by saying:

Turn to page 13 in the LTH Workbook and spend a few minutes reflecting and filling in that page on "Take Aways".

_____, would you please share any new Take Away you might have had from this exercise.

You might be asking yourselves: Where to now?

In the next exercise, we will introduce an effective skill that will empower you to create energy and future in yourself and in all those whom you lead. You will begin to learn how to be effective 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Coach: Do This After the Ground Zero Games

1. Good Habits Create Great Character and Great Leaders: Having finished the universally-grounded training, read page 196 together. It is in the LTH Workbook, Section III, Habit Change.

When done reading, ask the participant(s) to share their thoughts about the effects that one's thoughts have upon a person.

Then, give them the Homework.

Homework

1. Habit Change: Do the exercises and readings in LTH workbook, pp. 197-202.

Homework – That is vital and ongoing

2. Make a list of your-self talk this week and we will speak about it next time.

Resources

1. "Not Cogs in a Machine"
2. "Friedman's Agency and Anti-Labels"

Coach's Ground Zero (GZ) in Christ Overview – 0A

Coach: The next 30 plus pages are broken down into sections and related exercises. GZ in Christ Exercise 1-2 must be coached in the same session that the initial Ground Zero is taught. It might take up 90 minutes so leave time to do that. Yet, never rush the process. The participant(s) can only benefit from the process if it is experienced and pondered. There are some suggestions when to coach the other eight exercises or assign them as homework.

GZ in Christ Exercise 1 uses the **Nineveh Spiritual Discipline** to help the participant see the connection between Scripture and what they just learned about being 100% responsible for where they are, for what they are doing, and for what and how they are communicating. Such awareness is useful in conversing with the Holy Spirit and allowing the Spirit more contact points with the participant(s) to produce good fruit each moment of the day. The Nineveh Spiritual Discipline also touches on having a right attitude of mercy (as would Christ).

GZ in Christ Exercise 2 is focused on connecting the reality of our being the **Supreme Court Judges** of our thoughts to the Scripture exhortation of the Holy Spirit to **have the mind of Christ 24/7**. This is a fundamental connection and time spent pondering this with the participant(s) is a worthy effort.

GZ in Christ Exercise 3 is focused on additional scriptural texts that **reinforce** the teachings of **Exercise 2**. If time allows make it part of the coaching plan of the first session. If not, assign it for homework and ponder their reflections at the beginning of Session 2. Exercise 3 must be completed before coaching CHANGES.

General Principle Regarding the Number of Exercises in One Session

Under normal circumstances, do not do more than two habit-changing exercises within a skill set nor more than two scriptural based exercises in the same coaching session. Maybe only do one of each. **Maybe only one of one.**

Rationale: The reason is that you do not want to overload a person's reflection and integration process. Moreover, it is almost always absolutely necessary to repeat the same or similar exercises often over time to create new habits. Therefore, you can freely insert any of the exercises when coaching another skill if you think it might be helpful to that person at that time. Use your own prudent wisdom and base yourself on your own best practices and best outcomes.

GZ in Christ Exercise 4 is about Jesus' teaching on **repentance** and **good and evil in the thoughts of one's heart**. Jesus basically teaches that both good and evil come from the thoughts that we nurture in our minds.

[**Coach**, schedule Exercise 4 after coaching both **CHANGES** and the scriptures in **CHANGES in Christ** (God is a God of Hope and our Hope).

GZ in Christ Exercise 5 is about **temptations** common to everyone and the path to victory over all temptations. This session connects the Donald Duck / Pink Elephant experience to temptations popping into one's minds. A temptation-filled thought that pops into one's mind is just that. It is not a sin but a moment in which one can choose to accept or reject it. With a temptation, we have time and strength in the Holy Spirit to reject it and turn our focus to the good that the Holy Spirit tries always to "pop into" our minds.

[**Coach**: This can be studied more deeply in the "God's Conversation with Cain", which is a resource and must be assigned as homework before coaching TRADING.]

GZ in Christ Exercise 6 is about **Jesus' Response to Temptations**. It presents a model of how to defeat temptations. His model aligns with the practice of "countering the lies" that is taught in CALMS. Affinity to Jesus' manner of defeating temptations is also found in STANDS and STANDS in Christ.

GZ in Christ Exercise 7 analyzes **Satan's first temptation**. In the Garden, Satan shrewdly temps us to believe that God is not trustworthy. Satan is basically saying, "God is holding us back and does not want us to become all we can become. God is a liar. God is not pure goodness; God does not love us and is not loveable.

GZ in Christ Exercise 8 teaches us **how to counters Satan's lie** using both Scripture and the God created human ability to reason and apply logic.

(Exercise 8A) God is pure goodness.

(Exercise 8B) God' Love Letter to Us [I Cor 13:1-8]

(Exercise 9C) Psalm 22 = Jesus total Trust in God . Jesus never Doubts God's Love during his crucifixion.

GZ in Christ Exercise 9 teaches us about another powerful vaccine against temptations. When you seek to prioritize your day according to God's will under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and the teachings of Christ Jesus, you have a focus in life that protects you from various temptations. You will still be tempted but in the Spirit you will be far less vulnerable and more ready in Christ to reject temptations. You learn how to do that in **CALMS in Christ** when you learn how to transforming anxiety into problem solving serenity and to do **My Daily Bread**.

GZ in Christ Exercise 10 is about Paul's (and our) way out of the dilemma of sinning when we do not want to sin:

(Exercise 10A) Romans 7: Torn Between One Way and Another and the Way Out

(Exercise 10B) A True Personal Experience about the Way out of the Dilemma

(Exercise 10C) Romans 8: The New Reality and Victory over Sin in Christ

GZ in Christ Resources

1. Jesus' Revolution of Calling God, Father. (PDF)
2. Friedman's Agency and Anti-Labels in Christ (PDF)
3. God's Conversation with Cain (PDF)
4. Not Cogs in a Machine in Christ and in Quantum Mechanics (PDF)
5. Tough Texts that Undermine God's Pure Goodness (PDF)
6. The Mind of Christ, Reason and God's Will (PDF)
7. Getting to Know God (Booklet and online)
8. My Daily Bread (Book)
9. My Daily Bread, the Spiritual Discipline (online)
10. Sufficient Knowledge of God's True Character and Loving God. Jesus our Model (Book, PDF)

Coach's GZ in Christ 1: The Nineveh Spiritual Discipline

[Coach (1) The Nineveh Spiritual Discipline: Having finished the universally grounded training by reading and discussing page 196 in the LTH Workbook and having assigned the homework, it is now the moment to go over the Nineveh Spiritual Discipline. Have them download it or go online at: www.mydailybread.us/mydailybread/Nineveh_SP.html When they have their copy before them, **continue by saying:]**

Let us now move forward and read together the Nineveh Spiritual Discipline.

____, would you read the title and first few sentences. [Alternate the rest of reading. When you have finished reading the Nineveh Spiritual Discipline, **continue by saying:]**

____, please share what struck you during the reading.

[Allow everyone a chance to share.]

[When you have finished remember to incorporate their discoveries when you have finished sharing. **Continue by saying something to the effect:]**

As you can see, the Nineveh Spiritual Discipline is in some ways parallel to our being the Pilot of our movements. And God clearly holds us accountable to take responsibility for wherever we are at any moment and for whatever we are doing in that moment and whatever we are saying.

The **Nineveh Spiritual Discipline** is a useful tool as you can stop at any moment and ask yourself, "am I where God wants me to be right now and am I doing what God wants me to be doing and am I doing it with a right attitude?"

[Coach: (2) Have the Mind of Christ. When done discussing the Nineveh Spiritual Discipline, move on to the Christian texts about having the mind of Christ. These align with our responsibility to be the Supreme Court Judges of our thoughts. But having the mind of Christ adds to the responsibility of being the Supreme court Judge of our thoughts means that we must judge in in accord with how Jesus would think and judge the thoughts that enter into his mind.]

Exercise 1: The Nineveh Spiritual Discipline

[A Three Step Spiritual Discipline that is based on the Book of Jonah. The discipline can help us discern if we are where God wants us to be and doing what God wants us to be doing at any given moment and doing it with a humble, merciful and Christ like attitude]

a. Am I where God wants me to be right now? Jonah knew where God wanted him to be, but he did not want to be there, so he ran away. How often do you take flight because of anxiety, irritation, or anger about something or because you do not want to do God's will? You know the havoc that created in Jonah's life and the life of others around him. In this context, you can always stop and ask the Holy Spirit: *Am I where God wants me to be now?* If you discern that you are not, you need not fear because, if you humbly ask, the Holy Spirit, your Divine Counselor and Strengthened, will guide you and get you to where the Father wants you to be. Be grateful and thank the Spirit for his help. While the Spirit is always delighted to get you to where Abba wants you to be, you should always be humbly thankful to Christ.

b. Am I doing what God wants me to be doing right now? Jonah did not want to go to Nineveh because he did not want to do God's will. He did not want to call the people to repentance because he detested the people. How often do we refuse to do God's will because of dislikes? Nevertheless, Jonah eventually did do what God wanted him to do. And God used Jonah's external obedience to produce the good fruit of repentance in the people of Nineveh. However, Jonah's external obedience is not the fullness of what God requires of his children in order for them to be fully pleasing to Him.

c. Am I doing God's will with the mind of Christ? God is not pleased with Jonah's animosity toward the people of Nineveh. God does everything possible to get Jonah to have a heart like his for these people. He wants Jonah to have the mind of Christ toward these people. How often do we do God's will begrudgingly? Having the mind of Christ is more than doing the external will of God. In fact, having the mind of Christ cannot be determined externally, not even by tangible, good fruit as was visible in the repentance of the people in Nineveh due to Jonah's preaching as God willed.

Indeed, one must do God's external, tangible will, but to have the mind of Christ more fully, one must do that external will with a heart that is in tune with the very heart of Love, who is God. Love for God and neighbor is what our attitude must be in doing God's visibly verifiable will. This is clearly evidenced in Jesus' pure love both for the Father and for us when he embraced the cross with all its tangible suffering and his visibly verifiable death.

Summary of the Nineveh Spiritual Discipline:

(a) be where God wants you to be, (b) be doing what God wants you to be doing, (c) be doing it with the mind of Christ. These three aspects are intimately connected and *MDB* helps you connect the three together as one in your striving to do God's will 24/7 with the mind of Christ.

Coach's GZ in Christ 2: Have the Mind of Christ

[Coach: Say to the participant(s):]

We are to be the **Supreme Court Judge of our Thoughts** but, is there anything more for us as Christians. To find out let us ponder these verses from Philippians together. Let us look at the handout, **Exercise 2: Have the Mind of Christ**. "We have two translations of the same verses. When done, let us sharing what the Holy Spirit inspired in us after each reading. Now with grateful hearts, let us receive God's word.

[Coach: When done reading the first text, just follow the indications in the handout.]

[Coach: When done reading the second text, just follow the indications in the handout.]

[Coach: When done receiving and sharing how the Holy Spirit touched each participant, go on to the next series of translation of the same text. Continue by saying:]

To underline this calling to have the mind of Christ, let us listen to the Spirit exhort us in these six translations of the Philippians text:

[Coach: When done reading the six translation, just follow the indications in the handout.]

[Coach: When done receiving and sharing how God, the Holy Spirit touched yourself and each participant, continue by saying:]

Hopefully hearing these texts have helped you to better understand our calling in Christ and to instill a commitment to pursue the calling to have the mind of Christ 24/7 with all your heart, mind, soul and strength. **Clearly**, for us Christians to be the **Supreme Court Judge of their Thoughts** requires that we follow only those thought that are in in conformity with Jesus' teaching and with those Scripture text that have greatest affinity to Jesus' teachings.

Exercise 2: Have the Mind of Christ

(1) Don't push your way to the front; don't sweet-talk your way to the top. Put yourself aside, and help others get ahead. Don't be obsessed with getting your own advantage. Forget yourselves long enough to lend a helping hand. **Think of yourselves the way Christ Jesus thought of himself.** He had equal status with God but didn't think so much of himself that he had to cling to the advantages of that status no matter what. Not at all! When the time came, he set aside the privileges of deity and took on the status of a slave, became human! Having become human, he stayed human. It was an incredibly humbling process. He didn't claim special privileges. Instead, he lived a selfless, obedient life and then died a selfless, obedient death—and the worst kind of death at that—a crucifixion. [Phil 2:3-8, The Message]

[Everyone, share what the Holy Spirit convicted you of during the Scripture reading.]

(2) Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. **Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus:** Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a human, he humbled himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross! [New International Version]

[Everyone, share what the Holy Spirit convicted you of during the Scripture reading.]

(3) Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus. [King James Version, 21st].

Let the same mind be in you, _____, that was in Christ Jesus. [NRSV]

You must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had. [New Living Translation]

Have this attitude in yourself, _____, which was also in Christ Jesus. [NASB]

You should think in the same way Christ Jesus does. [New International Reader's Version].

Think, _____, the same way Jesus Christ thought. [Worldwide English New Testament]

[Everyone, share what the Holy Spirit convicted you of during the Scripture reading.]

Coach's GZ in Christ 3: Have the Mind of Christ

Coach: Start by saying to the participant(s): The previous text directing us to have the mind of Christ 24/7 is powerful and is central to our calling in Christ. But, it is important to ponder other texts that have an affinity. Let us therefore review other key exhortations of the Holy Spirit provided in the handout, "**Exercise 3: Mind of Christ = Thanking Like Christ**".

Coach: When everyone has finished sharing their "take aways" in Christ from 4-6, say something to the effect: "With such a clear calling from the Holy Spirit to have Christ's attitude in all circumstances, let us begin to monitor the thoughts that pop into our minds and accept or reject them as Christ would. Let us accept or reject them according to the word of God.

Let us count on the inner promptings of the Holy Spirit to help us. Jesus promised that the Holy spirit would help us. Jesus said: "The Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you."

Moreover, should anyone deny that God is calling us to have the mind of Christ 24/7, they make God a liar and proclaim God's word to be untrustworthy, misleading and false. We become children of the Father of Lies, the Evil One.

If we fall short in having the mind of Christ, let us confess our sin. We will receive an abundance of grace, powerful beyond description, to humbly and boldly fight the good fight of the faith, which is to have the mind of Christ 24/7."

Exercise 3: Mind of Christ = Thinking Like Christ

(4) No longer live as unbelievers do, in the futility of their thinking because of the deceitful lies of the world [the flesh and Satan] that harden their hearts to God’s word. You, instead, by the Holy Spirit, be made new in the attitude of your mind and put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness. [2 Cor 5:17; Ga 6:15] I affirm and insist on this in the Lord: No longer live as others in the futility of their minds ... but be renewed in the spirit of your mind and clothe yourself with the new self, created according to the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness. [Eph 4:17,23]

[Write down what the Holy Spirit has convicted you of during the Scripture reading.]

(5) [Therefore, be alert.] No longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming. [Eph 4:14] Do not conform any longer to the thinking patterns of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then, you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will. [Rom 12:2]

[Write down what the Holy Spirit has convicted you of during the Scripture reading.]

(6) For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets themselves up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make them obedient to Christ. [2 Cor 10:3-5]

[Write down what the Holy Spirit has convicted you of during the Scripture reading.]

Coach's GZ in Christ 4A-4B: Jesus on Good/Evil, Repentance

Coach: Do this section on Jesus' position about Good and Evil after the epistle texts confirming the command to have the "mind of Christ". Take this opportunity to remind the participants to monitor their thoughts in a notebook or in an electronic file.

The purpose of this section is to underline that Christ himself taught that all good and all evil begins in the thoughts of the heart, in the thoughts that we allow to grow within us or in the thoughts that we intentionally nurture. In other words, Jesus calls us to be the **Supreme Court Judge of our Thoughts**. We are to be guided in our thinking only by those thoughts that are in conformity with his gospel teachings.

Coach: The Greek word "καρδία" used in the New Testament is transliterated as "kardia" and literally is translated as "heart". The "heart" in Greek was also considered to be the seat of the inner self (composed of life, soul, mind, and spirit). In the New Testament it is often referred to as "one's thoughts", "one's way of thinking", "what one understands or holds to be true".

Jesus said: "Out of the thoughts of one's heart the mouth speaks. The good person brings out good from the good stored up in the thoughts of their hearts and the evil person brings out evil from the evil stored up in the thoughts of their hearts.

Coach: The Greek word "μετάνοια" is transliterated as "metanoia" and is used in the New Testament to mean "a radical change of mind" or "a complete change of the way one views life". That deeper understanding stands beneath the translation, "repent" and "repentance".

Coach: Have everyone share what the Spirit convicted him or her of after each Scripture reading.

Exercise 4A: Jesus Good/Evil Begins In One's Thoughts

Jesus: Good and Evil Begins in the Thoughts of One's Heart

"Out of the thoughts of one's heart the mouth speaks. The good person brings out good from the good stored up in the thoughts of their hearts and the evil person brings out evil from the evil stored up in the thoughts of their hearts. [Mt

[Write down what the Holy Spirit has convicted you of during the Scripture reading.]

Jesus: You will be held account for Idly Talk

Moreover, I tell you that if you speak idly—blabber without thinking—you will have to give account on the Day of Judgment for every idle word spoken. By thoughtful words, you will be acquitted, and by thoughtless words, you will be condemned."

[Write down what the Holy Spirit has convicted you of during the Scripture reading.]

Jesus: If your mind is pure, there will be sunshine in your soul.

"If your eye [mind] is pure (filled with thoughts of goodness and purity), there will be sunshine in your soul. But if your eye [mind] is clouded with evil thoughts and desires, you are in deep spiritual darkness. And oh, how deep that darkness can be!" [Mt 6: 22 - LTB]

[Write down what the Holy Spirit has convicted you of during the Scripture reading.]

Exercise 4B: Jesus on Repentance

Jesus on Repent! = Change Totally Your Way of Thinking

Jesus began to proclaim, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.” = “Totally change your way of thinking, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.” [Mt 4:17]

[Write down what the Holy Spirit has convicted you of during the Scripture reading.]

The people of Nineveh will rise up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it, because they repented [totally changed their way of thinking and behaving] at the proclamation of Jonah, and see, something greater than Jonah is here! [Lk 11:32]

[Write down what the Holy Spirit has convicted you of during the Scripture reading.]

Jesus said: “I tell you, _____; but unless you repent [radically change the thoughts of your heart], you will all perish as they did.” [Lk 13:2-3]

[Write down what the Holy Spirit has convicted you of during the Scripture reading.]

Coach's GZ in Christ 5: All are Tempted + the Path to Victory

Coach: Do this after having finished the section on Jesus' teachings about all evil and all good beginning in one's thoughts; that is, in those thoughts that one nurtures.

We are doing this insert because we want the participant(s) to be keenly aware that they will be tempted. Temptation will come often in life and sometimes continually during a day. But we do not want the participants to be alarmed but to be armed and know how to fight back. They must learn to fight back in their thinking. Counter any thought that is against gospel with a thought that aligns with Jesus teachings. We have the assured help of the Holy Spirit to do this.

From the text we see that Jesus himself was tempted. And because he was tempted he not only fully understands what it means to be tempted but also is filled with compassion toward us when we are tempted. And we already know that if we give in to the temptation, he is ready to extend us abundant mercy as he calls us to repent and go forth and do good.

Have the participant(s) read silently the Handout 5.

Coach: When they have finished have them focus on this portion of the text "For you do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with your weaknesses, but one who has similarly been tested in every way, just like you, yet without sin."

Coach's awareness: If Jesus was tempted; temptations will clearly be a reality for us. So it is important to understand (1) that temptations will come and they will start in our inner thoughts, (2) that the temptations that pops into our mind will urge us to sin, and (3) that the initial urge is not sin but the beginning point of the battle, (4) with the help of the Holy Spirit, we will be able to be victorious against such thoughts before they take root and cause us to sin

Of course, it is clear that if we allow the temptation to take root in our thinking, those ever intensifying thoughts against God's ways and God's goodness will stir up our passions and our unregulated passions will further cloud our minds to God's word. In that void, sin will take root in us and produces evil.

God's Conversation with Cain is a Good Example of this. However, you, the coach, must decide when it is most useful to use "God's conversation with Cain". In any case, be sure at some point in the training to use the insert, God's conversation with Cain." Note also that in the very first temptation in the garden, Satan was able to change Adam and Eve's thinking about the character of God. Satan, the father of lies, basically tricked them into believing that God was lying to them.

Have the participant(s) take turns reading texts 2-8 in GZ Handout 5.

Coach: Have everyone share what the Spirit convicted him or her of after each Scripture reading.

Exercise 5A: All are Tempted + the Path to Victory

(1) Since we have a great high priest—Christ Jesus—let us hold fast to our faith in him. Jesus himself has been tempted and tested. While Jesus has not sinned [given into temptation], Jesus has experienced it all [every sort of temptation] and is [fully aware of our struggles] and compassionately in touch with our reality. Therefore, be confident and draw near to his throne of grace and receive mercy and find help in time of temptation and testing. [Hebrews 4:14-16]

[Write down what the Holy Spirit has convicted you of during the Scripture reading.]

(2) When tempted, do not say, “God is tempting me.” God cannot be tempted, nor does God tempt anyone; but each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed. Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death. Do not be deceived! [James 1:13-16] [The good news is that] no temptation has overtaken you except what is common to humankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. So when you are tempted, know that God will provide a way out so that you can endure it. [1 Cor 10:13]

[Write down what the Holy Spirit has convicted you of during the Scripture reading.]

(3) Be alert. Your enemy, the Father of Lies, prowls around looking to deceive you. Fight back by standing firm in the faith; ... These attacks won't last forever. It won't be long before our generous God ... will make you strong, firm and steadfast. God gets the last word; yes, God does. [1 Peter 5: 8-10]

[Write down what the Holy Spirit has convicted you of during the Scripture reading.]

Exercise 5B: All are Tempted + the Path to Victory

(5) Consider it pure joy whenever you face trials and temptations of any kind, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work of perfecting you [in Christ]. Blessed is the one who perseveres ..., that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him. [James 1:2-4,12]

[Write down what the Holy Spirit has convicted you of during the Scripture reading.]

(6) If you lack wisdom [in facing temptations], ask God, who gives generously to all ... and it will be given to you. But when you ask, you must believe and not doubt, because the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. That person should not expect to receive anything from the Lord. Such a person is double-minded and unstable in all they do. [James 1:5-8]

[Write down what the Holy Spirit has convicted you of during the Scripture reading.]

(7) Let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. Run with perseverance the race marked out for us, ^{fixing} our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart. Moreover, in your struggle against sin, you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood. [He 12:1-4]

[Write down what the Holy Spirit has convicted you of during the Scripture reading.]

Coach's GZ in Christ 6: Jesus' Response to Satan's Temptations

Coach: You are doing two important things in presenting the participants with **text (1)**. First, it is clear that Jesus was tempted and was tempted in a weakened moments in his life and second, Jesus models what a powerful response to every temptation looks like.

Hand out Christian Insert GZ 6. If you are coaching via the internet, have them download the handouts you will be using for that coaching session or read it together with them online. When everyone has a text before them, **take turns reading text (1)**.

After reading the text: Return to look at how Jesus handed temptations. He is our best model of how we should handle temptations. Jesus counters the tempter's attempts to persuade him to break his trust in God the Father with the Scriptures. Even when the Tempter manipulates Scripture—people will manipulate Scripture—Jesus counters this false interpretation of Scripture with a correct interpretation of Scripture.

Clearly, whenever being tempted, we have a sure touchstone in Scripture to guide us. Have the participants **read text (2)** "The word of God is living and effective, sharper than any two-edged sword, penetrating even between soul and spirit, joints and marrow, and able to discern reflections and thoughts of your heart." [Hebrew 4:12]

Coach: Have everyone share what the Spirit convicted him or her of after each Scripture reading.

Exercise 6: Jesus' Response to Satan's Temptations

(1) Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. He fasted forty days and forty nights, and afterwards he was famished. The tempter came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread." But he answered, "It is written, 'One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"

[Write down what the Holy Spirit has convicted you of during the Scripture reading.]

Then the devil took him to the holy city and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, saying to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down; for it is written, 'He will command his angels concerning you,' and 'On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.'" Jesus said to him, "Again it is written, 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'"

[Write down what the Holy Spirit has convicted you of during the Scripture reading.]

Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor; and he said to him, "All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me." Jesus said to him, "Away with you, Satan! for it is written, Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him."

[Write down what the Holy Spirit has convicted you of during the Scripture reading.]

Then the devil left him, and suddenly angels came and waited on him. [Mt 4:1-10]

[Write down what the Holy Spirit has convicted you of during the Scripture reading.]

(2) "The word of God is living and effective, sharper than any two-edged sword, penetrating even between soul and spirit, joints and marrow, and able to discern reflections and thoughts of your heart." [Hebrew 4:12]

[Write down what the Holy Spirit has convicted you of during the Scripture reading.]

Coach's GZ in Christ 7: Satan's First Temptation = God is a Liar

Our God of pure goodness created all things good and created humankind in his own image and likeness and hence sees humans as very good indeed. As we are created in God's image and likeness and as we know that God is a community of three persons in a continual conversation of love and goodness, our true nature is to be in a continual conversation with God of love and seeking to do pure goodness. Christ Jesus was and he is our only model of this and what it means to be fully and truly human.

That God sent his son to give his life for our salvation and to teach us how to live a fully and truly human life is another sure grounding for our belief in God's pure goodness.

In fact, God in God's pure goodness and love for us put Adam in a wonderful garden: "The Lord God took Adam and put Adam in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it." Later, God created a companion, Eve, for Adam. As they both are created in the image and likeness of God, both the woman and the man were to have a flowing conversation of love and goodness with each other and with God. That is how they were created to be as both are fully and truly human.

Now to affirm human dignity and to provide humans with freedom of choice to love God and do good as they were created to be, "the Lord God instructed Adam, 'You may freely eat of every tree of the garden; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die.'" [Gen 3: 16-17] Adam clearly communicated this to the other fully and truly human person, Eve, as becomes clear in the next chapter.

Adam and Eve are not only Tempted to Doubt that God is pure goodness as are all persons, but they give into the temptation and sin-break the trusting loving conversation with God.

Now the serpent, whom God had made, ... said to the woman, ... you will not die;⁵ for God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God,^[a] knowing good and evil."⁶ So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate; and she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate.

Now, if we analyze the temptation, it is clear that both Adam and Eve doubt the pure goodness of God. If they had believed that God was pure goodness, they would never have given into the temptation to believe that God was a liar, a manipulator. The temptation as multiple aspects to it but ultimately it is the temptation to doubt that God is pure goodness; they doubt and their relationship with God is broken and they follow their own logic and distort the whole created order with many negative consequences.

In God conversation with Cain, the same underlying premise of not believing in the pure goodness and wisdom of a loving God lies at the origin of the Cain murdering Cain. See the article, God's conversation with Cain.

Exercise 7: Satan First Temptation: God is a Liar

(1) Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God really say, ‘You must not eat from any tree in the garden?’” The woman said to the serpent, “We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, but God did say, ‘You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.’”

“You will not certainly die,” the serpent said to the woman. “For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. [Ge 3:1-6]

[Write down what the Holy Spirit has convicted you of during the Scripture reading.]

I wish that you would bear with me in a little foolishness; but indeed you are bearing with me. For I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy; for I betrothed you to one husband, so that to Christ I might present you *as* a pure virgin. But I am afraid that, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds will be led astray from the simplicity and purity of *devotion* to Christ. [2 Cor 11:1-3]

[Write down what the Holy Spirit has convicted you of during the Scripture reading.]

No longer live as unbelievers do, in the futility of their thinking because of the deceitful lies of the world [the flesh and Satan] that harden their hearts to God’s word. You, instead, by the Spirit, will be made new in the attitude of your mind and put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness. [2 Cor 5:17; Ga 6:15]

[Write down what the Holy Spirit has convicted you of during the Scripture reading.]

Coach's GZ in Christ 8: About Doubting God's Goodness

Coach say to the participants: "God is present, always present, or God is not God. This is a conclusion of pure reason and/or a belief. However, that God is always present in a beneficial manner is assured only by faith in God's promises in Scripture."

[Quote taken from the back inside cover page of GTKG.]

Coach continue to say to the participants: Indeed, if God is not always present in a beneficial manner, if God is not a God of pure goodness, then there is no hope and no purpose or assurance of anything in life. Life would be a purely arbitrary without any grounding whatsoever. However, we know from Scripture that God is pure goodness and all that God created is good. In fact, from God's perspective after God created humans in his own image and likeness, God states that all God had created is **very good**, indeed.

Read text (1) with the participant(s).

Exercise 8A: God is Pure Goodness

(1) In the beginning ... God created the heavens and the earth. ³God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light.⁴ And **God saw that the light was good.** Then God said, "Let the waters under the sky be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear." And it was so. ... ¹²The earth brought forth vegetation: ... And **God saw that it was good.** ... ¹⁴And God said, ... "let there be lights in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth." And it was so. **And God saw that it was good.** ²⁰And God said, "Let the waters bring forth swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the dome of the sky." **And God saw that it was good.** ²⁴And God said, "Let the earth bring forth living creatures of every kind. ... And it was so. And **God saw that it was good.** ²⁶Then God said, "Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; ²⁷So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. And it was so. ³¹**God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good.** [Genesis 1:1-31]

[Write down what the Holy Spirit has convicted you of during the Scripture reading.]

(2) "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. [Jn 3:16]

[Write down what the Holy Spirit has convicted you of during the Scripture reading.]

(3) "Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." [Mt 11: 28-30]

[Write down what the Holy Spirit has convicted you of during the Scripture reading.]

Exercise 8B: God is Pure Love

The text below is inspired by 1 Corinthians 13 and framed as a personal letter from God to you. It provides insight into who God truly is. Through faith and through the Spirit, hear God speaking directly to you. If a glimpse of God's loving character strikes you, **Stop! Be still and listen!** God is speaking directly to you.

I, your God, am love, pure love. I do love. I always love for it is my nature to love, to be merciful, and to do all in my power to bring you, _____, home to me.

As love is patient, I, your God, am patient. My nature is to be kind; I am pure kindness. I am humble and not boastful. I respect your dignity; I confirm your freedom, _____, even when you use it to hurt my heart. I am never abrasive, nor sarcastic. I can never be so. Such thoughts and words are against my very nature. Just thinking of the hurt they would cause you, _____, would sadden me.

I am never rude. I have never been rude to you, _____, my son/daughter, not ever, not even once. And I will never be rude to you, _____, never, not even once. I, your God, am always considerate of all your needs.

Even when you hurt me by your sins, I am slow to act upon the hurt I receive. I ponder the pain you cause me, see your own pain and your brokenness, and have great compassion for you, _____. I never act off the first impulse of my anger. I keep no record of wrongs. I do not delight in any evil you do or any evil that befalls you, _____.

I rejoice with the truth. I rejoice when you, _____, know the truth of WHO I AM. That truth will break the chains that tie your heart down. It will free your spirit to fly joyfully to me on eagle's wings. The Spirit is the eagle of joy. By, with, and in the Holy Spirit, soar joyfully to me, _____. I am the Truth.

I always protect you, _____. I always trust. I always hope that you will come to me with all your heart, and pursue my ways. My ways are filled with love, goodness and truth. And I always persevere in doing good for you, _____, and in loving you. There is no end to the pure goodness of my love. That is truth!

I AM PERFECT LOVE. That is **WHO I AM.**

Once you truly believe that **I AM WHO I AM**—no matter what you feel—you will love and trust me, even when faithfulness requires enduring effort. Then, my Son, the Spirit, you, _____, and I will strive together to bring all relationships into the kind, warm, and tender embrace of my humble, gentle and loving heart. [from Getting to Know God, pp. 4-5.]

[Write down what the Holy Spirit has convicted you of during the Scripture paraphrasing.]

Exercise 8C: Psalm 22 = Trust of God

By Edward Santana-Grace, PhD

“Why Have You Forsaken Me” in Psalm 22 Is a Manifestation of Deep Trust in God

Some have mistakenly thought that Jesus’ cry on the cross, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” is a sign he had despaired of his Father’s pure goodness. If Jesus had actually given into the temptation to doubt God, the Father’s pure goodness, he would have sinned and hence would not be God incarnate, fully and truly God and fully and truly human, except in sin.

Now, while most Christians would not say that Jesus sinned even once, not a few unaware Christians have used this verse to permit themselves to give into the temptation and to really and truly doubt that is God’s pure goodness. Some actually nurture thoughts that God is cruel and punishing or that God does not love them. They obviously have sinned. To give into the temptation to doubt that God is pure goodness rather than to counter that doubt with belief in the love and pure goodness of the Father even if in that moment it is not apparent. Other Christians actually believe it is good and healthy to doubt God’s pure goodness. Other say it is just being human to doubt God’s pure goodness and they quote Jesus on the cross.

Given this misunderstanding that has lead many to sin and live in darkness, I have set before us Psalm in its entirety as it shows that Jesus “Why have you Forsaken me.” Is actually the first words to profound trust. Psalm is a conversation with God and in it is entirety it one that professes profound trust and ultimate victory over sin and death notwithstanding the apparent and clear horrible death that awaits Jesus on the cross.

In reading the psalm, let us be mindful that this is a form of direct address to God, that Jesus trusts God completely, that Jesus was a deep and pensive thinker, and that, given the role of memorization in Jesus culture, he probably knew the entire psalm by heart or, at least, the substance of the psalm, before he even began to utter the first words. The psalm begins:

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from saving me, so far from the words of my groaning? O my God, I cry out by day, but you do not answer. [PS 22:1-3]

Indeed, moments might have existed when God the Father allowed the Evil One to tempt Jesus into believing that his God had abandoned him on the cross. Granted this psalm that was on Jesus’ lips at the hour of his death (according to the gospel of Matthew and Mark) begins with a cry and a description of distress, but that is not where the psalm ends. As early as the beginning of the third verse, the psalm shifts from despair to victory with the powerful transitional word, *yet*, which can also be translated: *on the other hand, notwithstanding that, nevertheless*.

Yet, you are enthroned as the Holy One; you are the praise of Israel. In you our fathers put their trust; they trusted and you delivered them. They cried to you and were saved; in you they trusted and were not disappointed. [Ps 22:3-5]

The remaining verses of the psalm seesaws back and forth between temptation and trust, between description of plight and description of victory and the ultimate triumphant of God. Note how each description of plight in Psalm 22 mirrors other Scriptural texts about the suffering Messiah. Note how the psalm affords Jesus, the *suffering servant*, a response of trust and assurance of ultimate victory. It is as if Jesus', *My God, My God why have you forsaken me*, is a cry of ultimate trust and final victory; it is as if Jesus has already foreseen the events of the passion, knows they are for our salvation, and sees future generations streaming to God's pure heart because of the cross. Let us listen to this seesaw of thoughts:

But I am a worm and not a man, scorned by men and despised by the people. All who see me mock me; they hurl insults, shaking their heads: "He trusts in the LORD; let the LORD rescue him. Let him deliver him, since he delights in him." [Ps 22:6-8]

Yet you brought me out of the womb; you **made me trust** in you even at my mother's breast. From birth I was cast upon you; from my mother's womb you have been my God. Do not be far from me, for trouble is near and there is no one to help. [Ps 22:9-11]

The Psalmist, inspired by the Holy Spirit, then describes his plight, which seems like the series of events that Jesus sees unfolding before him:

Many bulls surround me; strong bulls of Bashan encircle me. Roaring lions tearing their prey open their mouths wide against me. I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint. ... A band of evil men has encircled me, they have pierced my hands and my feet.¹ I can count all my bones; people stare and gloat over me. They divide my garments among them and cast lots for my clothing². [Ps 22:12-18]

But you, O LORD, be not far off; O my Strength, come quickly to help me. Deliver my life from the sword, my precious life from the power of the dogs. Rescue me from the mouth of the lions; save me from the horns of the wild oxen. [Ps 22:19-21]

At the end of Psalm 22, the Psalmist is so sure of God's help and of God's ultimate triumph that it is easy to understand why Jesus chose to converse with God through this psalm. It proclaims God's ultimate victory: the triumph of God's *inner glory* over evil, suffering, and death:

¹ Is 53:5; Ze 12:10; John 19:34, 37.

² Mark 15:24; John 19:24

I will declare your name to my brothers; in the congregation, I will praise you. You, who fear the LORD, praise him! **...For he has not despised or disdained the suffering of the afflicted one; he has not hidden his face from him but has listened to his cry for help.**

From you, O Lord, comes the theme of my praise in the great assembly; before those who fear you will I fulfill my vows. All the ends of the earth will remember and turn to the LORD, and all the families of the nations will bow down before him, for dominion belongs to the LORD and he rules over the nations.

All the rich of the earth will feast and worship; all who go down to the dust will kneel before him--those who cannot keep themselves alive. Posterity will serve him; future generations will be told about the Lord. **They will proclaim his deliverance to a people yet unborn saying that he (the Lord) has done it.** [Ps 22:22-31]

The psalm is not about *despair* but God's ultimate *victory* over all injustices, terrible tribulations, and suffering. It is about an unwavering trust in God in the face of the worst of evil.

Indeed, Jesus' trust in God's pure goodness is guided and informed by the Scriptures, and, in this instance when he on the cross, Psalm 22 is a bold proclamation of Jesus trust in God and in the Father pure goodness and love. Jesus' scripture based knowledge of who God truly is assures the *suffering servant* that his passion has its origins in the compassionate, loving, faithful, and merciful heart of God, his Father. Because of this assurance, Jesus is able not only to overcome the temptation to doubt and despair of God—as we all will be tempted at one time or another. Instead, he is empowered to embrace the cross with equanimity, to scorn its shame, and to receive joy from the knowledge of the saving effects of his sacrifice. [Hebrews 12:1-4]

In other words, because of Jesus' profound conviction of God's *pure goodness*, he is able to embrace fully the Father's plan and to trust the Father's love-filled wisdom in his death on the cross. In the midst of real physical agony and temptations to believe that his Father has abandoned him, Jesus' heart remains filled with trust in his Father. Jesus so loves and trusts his Father's *humble, attentive, pure goodness* that he knows the cross can only reflect his Father's ultimate love of all God's children. Jesus can and does embrace the cross with deep peace, confident of its good and redeeming purposes.

[Write down what the Holy Spirit has convicted you of during the Scripture paraphrasing.]

Coach's GZ in Christ 9: A Vaccine Against Temptations

When done reading, Say: Let us now read God's word in **(1)** about how to order our life. This teaching forms the grounding of **My Daily Bread**, a spiritual discipline, you will learn latter. For now, let us listen to the word of God and **read text 2**.

When done, say: Of course, there are moments in life when we are in doubt about **what** to do but never about **how** to live. Let us listen to the attitude God requires of us at all times and places by **reading texts (2), (3) and (4)**.

When done reading, let us summarize: Jesus' strategy of actively countering the temptation with truth is an important model to follow. We are not to be passive in our thinking but counter the tempting though with God's word. This will require that one becomes very familiar with Jesus' core teachings and its affinities in the rest of Scripture, especially his clear teachings against worrying and unregulated anger as well as his teaching against lusting and against setting becoming rich in mortal terms as a goal in life.

Final consideration to share with the participants: We will most likely be attacked/tempted in our weakest point in our weakest moments as that is when Jesus was attacked. Now is also an opportune moment to familiarize **the participants with Getting to Know God**.

Coach: Have everyone share what the Spirit convicted him or her of after each Scripture reading.

Exercise 9: A Powerful Vaccine Against Temptations

(1) Do not worry about your life, or what you will eat, drink, or wear. Can you by worrying add a single hour to your life? O you of little faith. Do not worry. Your heavenly Father knows your needs. **Instead, set your mind on God's kingdom and what is right in God's eyes.** Then, all these things will be given to you as well. Therefore, do not worry about tomorrow. Each day has challenges enough and I will help you get through them. [Mt 6:24-34]

[Write down what the Holy Spirit has convicted you of during the Scripture paraphrasing.]

My Daily Bread – Link to MDB Guided by the Coach

(2) “A new command I give you, as I have loved you so you must love others.” [Jn 13:34]

[Write down what the Holy Spirit has convicted you of during the Scripture paraphrasing.]

(3) “Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you so that you may be a true child of your Father in heaven. Be, therefore, boundless in goodness [toward your enemy], as your heavenly Father's goodness is boundless [toward you]. [Mt 5:43-45, 48]

[Write down what the Holy Spirit has convicted you of during the Scripture paraphrasing.]

(4) “Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant ^{or} rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends.” [1 Cor 13:4-8]

[Write down what the Holy Spirit has convicted you of during the Scripture paraphrasing.]

Romans 7: Torn Between One Way and Another

¹⁻³ You shouldn't have any trouble understanding this, friends, for you know all the ins and outs of the law—how it works and how its power touches only the living. For instance, a wife is legally tied to her husband while he lives, but if he dies, she's free. If she lives with another man while her husband is living, she's obviously an adulteress. But if he dies, she is quite free to marry another man in good conscience, with no one's disapproval.

⁴⁻⁶ So, my friends, this is something like what has taken place with you. When Christ died he took that entire rule-dominated way of life down with him and left it in the tomb, leaving you free to "marry" a resurrection life and bear "offspring" of faith for God. For as long as we lived that old way of life, doing whatever we felt we could get away with, sin was calling most of the shots as the old law code hemmed us in. And this made us all the more rebellious. In the end, all we had to show for it was miscarriages and stillbirths. But now that we're no longer shackled to that domineering mate of sin, and out from under all those oppressive regulations and fine print, we're free to live a new life in the freedom of God.

⁷ But I can hear you say, "If the law code was as bad as all that, it's no better than sin itself." That's certainly not true. The law code had a perfectly legitimate function. Without its clear guidelines for right and wrong, moral behavior would be mostly guesswork. Apart from the succinct, surgical command, "You shall not covet," I could have dressed covetousness up to look like a virtue and ruined my life with it.

⁸⁻¹² Don't you remember how it was? I do, perfectly well. The law code started out as an excellent piece of work. What happened, though, was that sin found a way to pervert the command into a temptation, making a piece of "forbidden fruit" out of it. The law code, instead of being used to guide me, was used to seduce me. Without all the paraphernalia of the law code, sin looked pretty dull and lifeless, and I went along without paying much attention to it. But once sin got its hands on the law code and decked itself out in all that finery, I was fooled, and fell for it. The very command that was supposed to guide me into life was cleverly used to trip me up, throwing me headlong. So sin was plenty alive, and I was stone dead. But the law code itself is God's good and common sense, each command sane and holy counsel.

¹³ I can already hear your next question: "Does that mean I can't even trust what is good [that is, the law]? Is good just as dangerous as evil?" No again! Sin simply did what sin is so famous for doing: using the good as a cover to tempt me to do what would finally destroy me. By hiding within God's good commandment, sin did far more mischief than it could ever have accomplished on its own.

¹⁴⁻¹⁶ I can anticipate the response that is coming: "I know that all God's commands are spiritual, but I'm not. Isn't this also your experience?" Yes. I'm full of myself—after all, I've spent a long time in sin's prison. What I don't understand about myself is that I decide one way, but then I

act another, doing things I absolutely despise. So if I can't be trusted to figure out what is best for myself and then do it, it becomes obvious that God's command is necessary.

¹⁷⁻²⁰ But I need something *more*! For if I know the law but still can't keep it, and if the power of sin within me keeps sabotaging my best intentions, I obviously need help! I realize that I don't have what it takes. I can will it, but I can't *do* it. I decide to do good, but I don't *really* do it; I decide not to do bad, but then I do it anyway. My decisions, such as they are, don't result in actions. Something has gone wrong deep within me and gets the better of me every time.

²¹⁻²³ It happens so regularly that it's predictable. The moment I decide to do good, sin is there to trip me up. I truly delight in God's commands, but it's pretty obvious that not all of me joins in that delight. Parts of me covertly rebel, and just when I least expect it, they take charge.

²⁴ I've tried everything and nothing helps. I'm at the end of my rope. Is there no one who can do anything for me? Isn't that the real question?

²⁵ The answer, thank God, is that Jesus Christ can and does. He acted to set things right in this life of contradictions where I want to serve God with all my heart and mind, but am pulled by the influence of sin to do something totally different. [MSG Romans 7:1-25]

A Personal Experience of Romans 7 Conflict and Victor in Christ at Age 19

Romans 8 Describes Life When Christ is Chosen in Response to Sin

¹⁻² With the arrival of Jesus, the Messiah, that fateful dilemma is resolved. Those who enter into Christ's being-here-for-us no longer have to live under a continuous, low-lying black cloud. A new power is in operation. The Spirit of life in Christ, like a strong wind, has magnificently cleared the air, freeing you from a fated lifetime of brutal tyranny at the hands of sin and death.

³⁻⁴ God went for the jugular when he sent his own Son. He didn't deal with the problem as something remote and unimportant. In his Son, Jesus, he personally took on the human condition, entered the disordered mess of struggling humanity in order to set it right once and for all. The law code, weakened as it always was ..., could never have done that.

The law always ended up being used as a Band-Aid on sin instead of a deep healing of it. And now what the law code asked for—but we couldn't deliver—is accomplished [in Christ], we, instead of redoubling our own efforts [trying ever harder to lift ourselves up by our own boot straps], simply embrace what the Spirit is doing in us.

⁵⁻⁸ Those who think they can do it on their own end up obsessed with measuring their own moral muscle but never get around to exercising it in real life. Those who trust God's action in them find that God's Spirit is in them—living and breathing God! Obsession with self in these matters is a dead end; attention to God leads us out into the open, into a spacious, free life. Focusing on the self is the opposite of focusing on God. Anyone completely absorbed in self ignores God, ends up thinking more about self than God. That person ignores who God is and what God is doing. And God isn't pleased at being ignored.

⁹⁻¹¹ But if God himself has taken up residence in your life, you can hardly be thinking more of yourself than of him. Anyone, of course, who has not welcomed this invisible but clearly present God, the Spirit of Christ, won't know what we're talking about. But for you who welcome him, in whom he dwells—even though you still experience all the limitations of sin—you yourself experience life on God's terms. It stands to reason, doesn't it, that if the alive-and-present God who raised Jesus from the dead moves into your life, he'll do the same thing in you that he did in Jesus, bringing you alive to himself? When God lives and breathes in you (and he does, as surely as he did in Jesus), you are delivered from that dead life. With his Spirit living in you, your body will be as alive as Christ's!

¹²⁻¹⁴ So don't you see that we don't owe this old do-it-yourself life one red cent. There's nothing in it for us, nothing at all. The best thing to do is give it a decent burial and get on with your new life. God's Spirit beckons. There are things to do and places to go!

¹⁵⁻¹⁷ This resurrection life you received from God is not a timid, grave-tending life. It's adventurously expectant, greeting God with a childlike "What's next, Papa?" God's Spirit touches our spirits and confirms who we really are. We know who he is, and we know who we are: Father and children. And we know we are going to get what's coming to us—an unbelievable inheritance! We go through exactly what Christ goes through. If we go through the hard times with him, then we're certainly going to go through the good times with him!

¹⁸⁻²¹ That's why I don't think there's any comparison between the present hard times and the coming good times. The created world itself can hardly wait for what's coming next. Everything in creation is being more or less held back. God reins it in until both creation and all the creatures are ready and can be released at the same moment into the glorious times ahead. Meanwhile, the joyful anticipation deepens.

²²⁻²⁵ All around us we observe a pregnant creation. The difficult times of pain throughout the world are simply birth pangs. But it's not only around us; it's *within* us. The Spirit of God is arousing us within. We're also feeling the birth pangs. These sterile and barren bodies of ours are yearning for full deliverance. That is why waiting does not diminish us, any more than waiting diminishes a pregnant mother. We are enlarged in the waiting. We, of course, don't see what is enlarging us. But the longer we wait, the larger we become, and the more joyful our expectancy.

²⁶⁻²⁸ Meanwhile, the moment we get tired in the waiting, God's Spirit is right alongside helping us along. If we don't know how or what to pray, it doesn't matter. He does our praying in and for us, making prayer out of our wordless sighs, our aching groans. He knows us far better than we know ourselves, knows our pregnant condition, and keeps us present before God. That's why we can be so sure that every detail in our lives of love for God is worked into something good.

²⁹⁻³⁰ God knew what he was doing from the very beginning. He decided from the outset to shape the lives of those who love him along the same lines as the life of his Son. The Son stands first in the line of humanity he restored. We see the original and intended shape of our lives there in him. After God made that decision of what his children should be like, he followed it up by calling people by name. After he called them by name, he set them on a solid basis with himself. And then, after getting them established, he stayed with them to the end, gloriously completing what he had begun.

³¹⁻³⁹ So, what do you think? With God on our side like this, how can we lose? If God didn't hesitate to put everything on the line for us, embracing our condition and exposing himself to the worst by sending his own Son, is there anything else he wouldn't gladly and freely do for us? And who would dare tangle with God by messing with one of God's chosen? Who would dare even to point a finger? The One who died for us—who was raised to life for us!—is in the presence of God at this very moment sticking up for us. Do you think anyone is going to be able to drive a wedge between us and Christ's love for us? There is no way! Not trouble, not hard times, not hatred, not hunger, not homelessness, not bullying threats, not backstabbing, not even the worst sins listed in Scripture:

They kill us in cold blood because they hate you. We're sitting ducks; they pick us off one by one.

None of this fazes us because Jesus loves us. I'm absolutely convinced that nothing—nothing living or dead, angelic or demonic, today or tomorrow, high or low, thinkable or unthinkable—absolutely *nothing* can get between us and God's love because of the way that Jesus our Master has embraced us. [Romans 8:1-39 MSG]

Direction on Resources

Coach's Directions To God's Conversation with Cain

Coach: study this key before reading it with the participants in class. It is online at partners4christ.weebly.com ; click on "God's Conversation with Cain."

In Genesis 4:4-7, the struggle between *the temptation to sin* and *actually sinning* is described in such illuminating, slow motion that participants will be able to see clearly the distinction between *the thoughts prompting one to sin* and *letting the thoughts nest in your mind that give birth to sin*.

God commands Cain: Do not let the thoughts of revenge nest in his mind. He does not say Cain sinned because the thought of revenge popped into his mind. This is important as many Christians still confuse the *temptation to sin* with *sinning*. That becomes a source of confused relationships with God, untold mental and spiritual anguish for some and a loss of clear thinking about battling temptations with the Spirit.

Another reason for using God's Conversation with Cain is that it can really help the participants understand that God is always prompting us to do good more often than the flesh, the world and Satan are tempting us to sin—to reject the pure goodness that lies within all God's teachings, commandments and promptings. In fact, God—not we of ourselves—is the first source of good thoughts and good actions. ("*Jesus said: 'Why do you call me good? No one is good except God alone'.*" [Mk 10:18; Lk 18:19]) And this is good news as it assures us that God, who is pure goodness, will always be urging us to do good; that is to follow God's ways. And God rewards those who believe God exists and follow God's ways. [He 11:6]

We are now going to read and reflect on Genesis 4:4-7. Please go to *God's Conversation with Cain*. _____, would you begin with the biblical text.

Assign the rest of reading until you have reached the end of page 3. When they have finished reading page 3, continue by saying: _____, please share what struck you during the reading. Allow everyone a chance to share. When they have finished, continue by saying .

God holds us accountable to be the Supreme Court Judges of our Interpretive Thoughts, and to master them in accordance with God's commandments.

Allow everyone a chance to share one thing. When they have finished, **continue by saying** . These texts of God's word concerning our communication can be seen in parallel to our being the Gatekeeper of our mouth, facial expressions and body language. And God clearly holds us accountable for every care less word we speak.

[pause, and let it sink in]

What is your take away from this encounter with God's word? What is one thing that struck you? When as many people as time allows have shared, **continue by saying:**

You might be asking yourselves: Where to now?

In the next exercise, we will introduce an effective skill that will empower you to create energy and future in yourself and all those whom you are to lead.

You will begin to learn how to be effective 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Place and teach at the end of CHANGES Visual aids to see the Essence of Character:

When finished, go to section IV: Character in LTH pp. 203-210 and teach it to the participant(s) as you have been taught. When done, ask the participant(s) to share their thoughts about these teachings on Character.

1. The Situation when human no longer believe in the pure goodness of God's teachings

⁵The LORD saw that the wickedness of humankind was great in the earth, and that every inclination of the thoughts of their hearts was only evil continually. ⁶And the LORD was sorry that he had made humankind on the earth, and it grieved him to his heart. ⁷So the LORD said, "I will blot out from the earth the human beings I have created—people together with animals and creeping things and birds of the air, for I am sorry that I have made them."

2. Noah Pleases God – Believes in God's Goodness

·But Noah found favor in the sight of the LORD. [Genesis 6: 5-8]

Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his generation; Noah walked with God." Note how "walked with God" implies had an on going conversation with God and followed God's ways God told Noah to Build an Ark. Noah did this; he did all that God commanded him. [Genesis 6: 9