



# LIVING BIBLICALLY

GLC  UPGRADES

**NAME** \_\_\_\_\_

**CONTACT INFO:** \_\_\_\_\_

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# GLC UPGRADES

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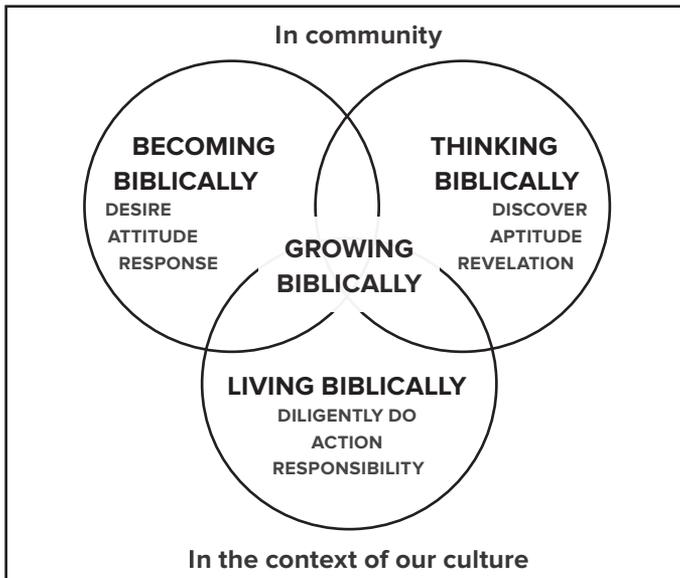
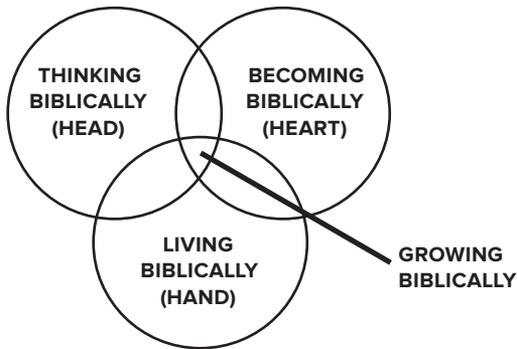
SESSION 1

# **DISCERNMENT:** **THE KEY TO GROWING BIBLICALLY**

# EXAMINE

## 3 Dimensions of Growing Biblically

1. *Thinking Biblically* (involves the Head)
2. *Becoming Biblically* (involves the Heart)
3. *Living Biblically* (involves the Hand)



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## Growing Biblically Involves Knowing and Experiencing God

Theology = *theos* (God) + *logia* (words)  
= words or study about God

**“What comes into our minds  
when we think about God  
is the most important thing about us.”**

A.W. Tozer, *The Knowledge of the Holy*

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### KEY LESSON # 1:

**Thinking Biblically Begins with \_\_\_\_\_  
(i.e., “theology”)**

**“Theology is a way of paying attention to God,  
and to everything else in its ‘God-relatedness.’”**

Charles M. Wood & Ellen Blue,  
*Attentive to God: Thinking Theologically in Ministry*

### 3 Demands of “Growing Biblically”

1. We must get our theology (i.e., what is true about God) right.
2. We must have a theology that accurately reflects God, as He has chosen to reveal Himself.
3. We must dedicate ourselves to the pursuit of knowing & understanding God, by separating what is true about God from what is false.

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## Thinking Biblically Demands Thinking Theologically

Thinking Theologically = thinking rightly & truly about God  
= cultivating & forming a capacity for attention to God

## 2 Related Terms in Thinking Theologically

Theologize = to treat a topic or subject from a theological viewpoint  
(i.e., from God's point of view)

Theological Reflection = the reflection that results from treating a topic  
or subject from a theological viewpoint  
(i.e., from God's point of view)

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## Tool for Theological Reflection

Journaling = recording God's works & wonders in our life & ministry  
= reflecting on God's Word, as it relates to life & ministry

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## 3 Steps in Journaling

1. Remember God's Works (i.e. Thanksgiving);
2. Reflect on God's Word (i.e., Insight); &
3. Request for More of God's Wonders (i.e., Prayer)

### Sample Journal Entry (January 28, 2009)

#### Reflection on 1 Samuel 3:1–10

1. Lesson on "Availability":

Samuel's Response: "Here I am; You called me" (3:5a, 6b, 8b) –  
note: the Lord called Samuel (3:4, 6a, 8a, 10a) & Samuel responded  
quickly

My Response in Prayer: "Lord, you desire that I be totally available  
for You. Here am I, Totally available for You."

2. Lesson on “Attentiveness”:

Samuel’s Response: “Speak, Lord, for Your servant is listening” (3:9b, 10b)

My Response in Prayer: “Lord, You desire that I be attentive & be listening to You. Speak, Lord, Your servant is listening.”

**Major Challenge: Do Journaling!**

Journaling makes us available & attentive to God.

**Thinking Theologically in 3 Senses**

**1. Thinking Theologically as an Activity**

(i.e., paying attention to God; understanding reality; studying, analyzing, deliberating, forming judgments)

**2. Thinking Theologically as a Product of that Activity**

(i.e., judgments or conclusions reached & then expressed in words or deeds

[e.g., systematic accounts; doctrinal proposals; sermons; emergency relief efforts; campaigns for social justice])

**3. Thinking Theologically as an Aptitude**

(i.e., engaging in theological reflection; developing a capacity or disposition to pay attention theologically; cultivating good theological judgment or practical wisdom)

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**KEY LESSON # 2:**

**The Key to Thinking Theologically and Biblically**

is \_\_\_\_\_.

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**Discernment: The Key to Growing Theologically and Biblically**

*“So give Your servant a discerning heart to govern Your people & to distinguish between right & wrong. For who is able to govern this great people of Yours?”*

(1 Kings 3:9)

“discerning heart” (or “understanding mind”)

= hearing heart or listening heart

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**Common Definitions of “Discernment”**

1. Ability to feel or perceive something with the mind & the senses
2. Prayerful reflection & discussion before making a major decision
3. Process of discovering, with God’s help, God’s will for our lives
4. Process of prayerful reflection which leads a person or community to understanding of God’s call at a given time or in particular circumstances of life. It involves listening to God in all the ways God communicates with us: in prayer, in the Scriptures, through the Church & the world, in personal experience, & in other people

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## O.T. Words of Discernment

Bin (“insight”) – to consider, perceive, or regard; to separate things from one another at their points of difference in order to distinguish them

Bina (“understanding”) – intellectual understanding or the faculty of understanding (Prov. 3:5; 1 Chron. 12:32)

Tebuna (“skill”) – cleverness, the capacity for discerning the right course of action (Deut. 32:28; Psa. 147:5)

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## N.T. Words of Discernment

Diakrino (“to judge”) – to separate, to make distinction, to judge truly (1 Cor. 2:14-15)

“the divinely given ability to distinguish God’s thoughts & ways from all others”

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## Definition of “Discernment”

**“Discernment is the skill of understanding & applying God’s Word with the purpose of separating truth from error & right from wrong”**

Tim Challies, *The Discipline of Spiritual Discernment*

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## Definition of “Growing Biblically”

Growing Biblically is:

1. The ability to discern theologically;
2. The cultivation of the capacity for attention to God, by developing the skill of understanding & applying God’s life-transforming Word, so that we can separate truth from error & right from wrong;
3. Thinking biblically + Becoming biblically + Living biblically

## EXPERIENCE

### Assignment

1. Start or re-start journaling this week;
2. Apply the T.I.P. journaling process; and
3. Begin thinking biblically on the 1 area in your life needs discernment from God now.

SESSION 2

# **THE BIBLE:** **THE KEY TO THINKING BIBLICALLY**

# EXAMINE

## What the O.T. says about Scriptures

*“The law of the Lord is perfect, refreshing the soul. The statutes of the Lord are trustworthy, making wise the simple. The precepts of the Lord are right, giving joy to the heart. The commands of the Lord are radiant, giving light to the eyes. The fear of the Lord is pure, enduring forever. The decrees of the Lord are firm, and all of them are righteous.”*  
(Psalm 19:7–9)

### 6 Synonyms of Scriptures (Based on Psalm 19:7–9)

1. “*law*” (i.e., instruction that points to the road of life);
2. “*statutes*” (i.e., testimony of God’s self-authenticating revelation);
3. “*precepts*” (i.e., God’s authority to speak);
4. “*commands*” (i.e., God’s authority over us);
5. “*fear*” (i.e., response produced by the Bible to submit to God’s authority);
6. “*ordinances*” (i.e., God’s judgments that arbitrate the affairs of people).

### 6 Descriptions of Scriptures (Based on Psalm 19:7–9)

1. “*perfect*” (i.e., reflects God’s integrity, uprightness, & fidelity);
2. “*trustworthy*” (i.e., true & verifiable in the situations of life);
3. “*right*” (i.e., straightforward & just, leading to uprightness);
4. “*radiant*” (i.e., pure, effecting more godliness);
5. “*pure*” (i.e., flawless, refined like silver); &
6. “*sure*” (i.e., utterly reliable).

### 6 Benefits of Scriptures (Based on Psalm 19:7–9)

1. “*refreshing the soul*” (i.e., it points the road to a refreshing life);
2. “*making wise the simple*” (i.e., it reveals God’s will & ways in all areas of life);
3. “*giving joy to the heart*” (i.e., it enables us to rejoice with peace and tranquility);
4. “*giving light to the eyes*” (i.e., pure, effecting more godliness);
5. “*enduring forever*” (i.e., flawless, refined like silver); &

- 
6. “righteous” (i.e., it always declares what is right & what leads to righteous living).

*“They are more precious than gold, than much pure gold; they are sweeter than honey, than honey from the honeycomb. By them your servant is warned; in keeping them there is great reward.”*  
(Psalm 19:10–11)

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## **What the N.T. says about Scriptures**

*“All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.”*  
(2 Timothy 3:16–17)

## **God’s Word is Our Wealth in The World and Beyond**

1. The whole Bible is “inspired” (literally, “God-breathed” or “God is the source or origin).
2. Inspired means that God’s words were given through men supervised by the Holy Spirit so that their writings are without error.
3. The Bible was written by 39 authors over 15 centuries; they never got together, yet the themes were united throughout the Bible.

## **God’s Word Makes Us Wise in Our Walk**

1. The whole Bible is “useful” (i.e., profitable; valuable; beneficial).
2. The 4 areas of the Bible’s usefulness are for:
  - “teaching” (i.e., instructing us in the truth);
  - “rebuking” (i.e., exposing our errors & refuting misunderstanding);
  - “correcting” (i.e., convicting us of our misguided actions & disobedience, restoring us to the right path); &
  - “training” (i.e., child-training, developing a system of discipline to develop character in a child).

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## God's Word Makes Us Watch Out for Good Works

1. The whole Bible makes us “equipped” (i.e., fit; in shape; complete, capable, proficient in the sense of being able to meet all demands) for doing good works; &
  2. The Bible enables the “man of God” (i.e., one who provides spiritual leadership to others) to do everything God call us to become and do.
- .....

## The Bible

1. Does not occur in any part of Scripture, but is the most familiar term for Scripture;
2. From the word *biblios* = Greek name for the fibrous outer coat or bark of the papyrus
3. Papyrus = reed plant that grew in the lakes & rivers of Egypt & Syria;
4. *Biblia* = “writings” or “rolls” (a designation for roll-up scrolls);
5. As early as the 2nd century A.D., Christians began using *biblia* to refer to the sacred books of Scripture.

## Testament = “Covenant” or Agreement

“The Old commences what the New completes.  
The Old gathers around Sinai, the New around Calvary.  
The Old is associated with Moses, the New with Christ.  
From Adam to Abraham, we have the history of the human race.  
From Abraham to Christ, we have the history of the chosen race.  
From Christ on, we have the history of the Church.”

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## Diversity of the Bible

1. Written over a 1,500-year span;
2. Written for over 40 generations;
3. Written by 39 authors from every walk of life:
  - Moses - political leader, trained in the universities of Egypt;
  - Peter - fisherman;
  - Amos - herdsman;
  - Joshua - military general;
  - Nehemiah - cupbearer;
  - Daniel - prime minister;
  - Luke - doctor;
  - Solomon - king;
  - Matthew - tax-collector;
  - Paul - rabbi.
4. Written in different places:
  - Moses in the wilderness;
  - Jeremiah in a dungeon;
  - Daniel on a hillside & in a palace;
  - Paul inside prison walls;
  - Luke while traveling;
  - John on the isle of Patmos;
  - Others in the rigors of a military campaign.
5. Written in different times:
  - David in times of war;
  - Solomon in times of peace
6. Written during different moods:
  - Some writing from the heights of joy & others writing from the depths of sorrow and despair
7. Written on 3 continents:
  - Asia, Africa and Europe

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## Unity of the Bible = Jesus Christ

*“The Old Testament looks forward to Jesus & the New Testament looks back. The Old prepares us for Jesus through figures, symbols, & predictions, & the New portrays & explains Jesus as their complete fulfillment. The old glimpses His shadow; the New reveals His substance.”*  
(cf. Luke 24:26-27, 44-46)

## Fullest Expression of Truth Found in Jesus Christ

**“The reason there is such a thing  
as objective good outside ourselves  
is that there is God outside ourselves.  
And most concretely & specifically,  
God has made Himself known objectively  
& specifically in Jesus Christ in Scripture”**

John Piper

The fullest expression of truth  
is in the person of Jesus Christ.

The Bible was given to us to guide us  
to Jesus Christ, and the Bible is a book  
that speaks primarily of His person & work.

Let's pay attention to the Bible's  
Christocentric (i.e., focused on Jesus)  
& redemptive themes.

*“And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, He explained to them  
what was said in all the Scriptures concerning Himself”*  
(Luke 24:27)

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## Definition of “Truth”

Truth = that which is consistent with the mind, will,  
character, glory, & being of God  
= the self-expression of God

## Truth is Theological

1. Truth is what God thinks & says; it is what God does.
2. Truth is what God has revealed of himself in the Bible.
3. Truth is found in its fullest form in God, for He is truth.
4. God is the very source & origin of all truth.

## Truth is Biblical

1. Truth about God (i.e., what God thinks, says, & does) is found in the Bible.
2. The Bible’s source is God, the God of all truth.
3. The Bible is God’s guide to our life, relationships, & ministry.
4. The Bible serves as the key to thinking theologically.

## Training of Medical Doctors

In 1910, the Carnegie Foundation released *Medical Education in the United States & Canada*, a report researched & written by Abraham Flexner.

One of Flexner’s major recommendations provided 4 years of intensive training, the 1st 2 dealing with basic science & the following 2 with clinical training.

The 1st 2 years were broken into 2 fundamental science blocks: the 1st year being devoted to learning normal human anatomy & physiology, & the 2nd year focusing on abnormal physiology & the disruptions of disease.

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## Truth About Truth

Even today, most medical schools follow this established pattern: focusing 1st on what is normal & good, & only later teaching what is irregular (i.e., the result of disease & abnormality). This aspect of Flexner's report is also true about truth.

**We can best know what is wrong by  
first knowing what is right.**

## Four Ways of Distinguishing Between Genuine & Counterfeit Money

1. "Touch"  
(i.e., real money is printed on unique cotton-based paper; fake money is waxy);
2. "Tilt"  
(i.e., real money has holographic stripe/area with colors of rainbow & tiny numbers);
3. "Look Through"  
(i.e., by holding bill to light, ghost-like watermark image appears); &
4. "Look At"  
(i.e., study the bill by looking for fine-line printing).

## Four Lessons Similar to Discernment & Truth

1. Identifying counterfeit currency is not an exceptionally difficult task & certainly not one that only experts can master;
2. People who create counterfeit money typically invest minimal effort in creating a reproduction of the genuine currency;
3. It is important to identify a number of characteristics of truth; &
4. It is best to focus more attention on what is genuine than on what is counterfeit.

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## Test Everything!

*“Test everything. Hold on to the good. Avoid every kind of evil”  
(1 Thessalonians 5:21–22)*

TEST (dokimazo) = prove, try, examine, discern

## 7 Areas that The Bible Teaches Us to Test

### 1. Teaching

*“Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness & examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true.” (Acts 17:11)*

### 2. Prophecy

*“Do not treat prophecies with contempt. Test everything.”  
(1 Thessalonians 5:20–21a)*

### 3. Spirits

*“Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world.” (1 John 4:1)*

### 4. Leaders

*“They must first be tested; and then if there is nothing against them, let them serve as deacons.” (1 Timothy 3:10)*

### 5. Other Believers

*“In addition, we are sending with them our brother who has often proved to us in many ways that he is zealous, and now even more so because of his great confidence in you” (2 Corinthians 8:22)*

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**6. The Times**

*“Hypocrites! You know how to interpret the appearance of the earth and the sky. How is it that you don’t know how to interpret this present time?” (Luke 12:56)*

**7. Ourselves**

*“Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves. Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you – unless, of course, you fail the test?” (2 Corinthians 13:5)*

*“Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved”  
(2 Timothy 2:15a)*

*“A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup.” (1 Corinthians 11:28)*

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**Albert Mohler’s 3 Levels of Theological Urgency  
(Or “Theological Triage”)**

**1. First-Level Issues**

Those issues that are most central & essential to the Christian faith. (e.g., doctrines of the Trinity, atonement, the deity & humanity of Jesus Christ, justification by faith alone, authority of Scripture)

Denial of these key doctrines represents the abandonment of biblical Christianity.

**2. Second-Level Issues**

Those issues that believers may disagree on but still represent important issues & will form significant boundaries between Christians. (e.g., mode of baptism; continuing miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit)

These doctrines have often defined or divided denominations.

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### 3. Third-Level Issues

Those issues over which Christians may disagree even while having close fellowship & remaining in the same local church. (e.g., whether Christians may consume alcohol in moderation; whom to vote).

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## **Guidelines in Integrating Biblical Insights to Everyday Life**

1. Be aware of the interplay of the Text, the Reader, & the Author!
  - Author – pay attention to author’s historical & cultural context;
  - Text – pay attention to the literary genre;
  - Reader – pay attention to the social location, emotional condition of the original readers & our own.
  
2. Be aware that context is “king”!
  - Context – refers to the verses before & after a text under study  
Let’s not take any biblical text out of context.
  
3. Be aware that the bridge from interpretation to application is principalization!
  - Principialization – the transitional step of getting principles from the interpretation step to the application step.  
Let’s not over-spiritualize or allegorize; let’s principalize.

# EXPERIENCE

## Assignment

1. Continue to journal this coming week.
2. Apply the 3 guidelines in integrating biblical insights to your everyday life; and
3. Share what you're learning from your quiet time (using your journal) or our class sessions (using your notes) to one person this week.

SESSION 3

**DESIRING  
GOD'S WILL:  
THE KEY TO BECOMING BIBLICALLY**

# EXAMINE

## Definition of “Discernment”

**“Discernment is the skill of understanding & applying God’s Word with the purpose of separating truth from error & right from wrong”**

Tim Challies, The Discipline of Spiritual Discernment

## Discovering “Truth”

Discernment is primarily concerned with the truth of God.

## Doing God’s “Will”

Discernment is equally concerned with obeying the truth of God.

## Discerning God’s “Will”

1. Discernment moves us to seek God & to submit to his will, which is founded upon & inseparable from God’s truth.
2. “Discerning God will is the skill of understanding & applying God’s Word, with the purpose of separating right from wrong.”

## 2 Theological Terms for God’s Will

GOD’S “DECRETIVE” WILL (or God’s Will of Decree)  
= God’s “secret” will

GOD’S “PRECEPTIVE” WILL (or God’s Will of Command)  
= God’s “revealed” will

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## Details on God's Will of Decree

1. It is the will that has existed fully & finally before the creation of the earth.
2. It is the will through which God has decreed all that will happen, & that nothing & no one can change or interrupt his will.

## God's Will of Decree in Isaiah 46:9–11

*“Remember the former things, those of long ago; I am God & there is no other; I am God, & there is none like Me. I make known the end from the beginning, from ancient times, what is still to come. I say: My purpose will stand, I will do all that I please. From the east I summon a bird of prey; from a far-off land, a man to fulfill My purpose. What I have said, that I will bring about; what I have planned, that I will do.”*

*Isaiah 46:9–11*

## 4 Lessons from Isaiah 46:9-11

1. God reveals His absolute sovereignty over all of creation.
2. God alone rules all things through all times.
3. What God has purposed, whatever God has decided upon, will come to pass.
4. There is none who can change or interrupt His will & nothing can happen outside of it.

## God's Will of Decree in Deuteronomy 29:29

*“The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but the things revealed belong to us & our children forever, that we may follow all the words of this law.”*

*Deuteronomy 29:29*

- 
1. God's secret will is hidden to us.
  2. God chooses not to reveal it to us, & it does not figure into our decision-making, because it is, by nature, secret.
  3. When we speak of discerning God's will, we do not speak of His secret will.

### **Examples of God's Will of Decree**

1. The exact date when Jesus will return;
2. The actual name of the Antichrist;
3. What happened to Jesus from age 12 until His public ministry

### **Details on God's Will of Command**

4. It is God's revealed will that directs how we are to live.
5. It refers to all those things that God tells us to do in the Bible.

### **Examples of God's Will of Command**

1. \_\_\_\_\_

*"Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is. Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit."  
Ephesians 5:17-18*

2. \_\_\_\_\_

*"It is God's will that you should be sanctified."  
1 Timothy 3:10*

3. \_\_\_\_\_

*"Give thanks for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus."  
1 Thessalonians 5:18*

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## 4 Guidelines in Seeking God's Will

1. When God's commands are explicit, we must obey immediately, joyfully, & without question.
2. Where the Bible contains no explicit guidance, God gives us freedom & responsibility to choose, based on what we know about His character & truth revealed in the Bible.
3. Where the Bible contains no explicit command or guidance, God gives us wisdom & discernment.
4. When we have chosen what is moral & wise, we must trust our sovereign God to work all details together for good.

## Understanding Two Kingdoms

1. Kingdom of Men (or kingdom on earth)

*"Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom"*

*Mark 13:8a*

*"You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them."*

*Mark 10:42*

It is characterized by the \_\_\_\_\_.

2. Kingdom of God (or kingdom of earth)

*"The kingdom of God is near"*

*Mark 1:15b*

*"Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all."*

*Mark 10:43–44*

It is characterized by the \_\_\_\_\_.

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## Understanding the Kingdom of God

1. Kingdom (or basileia) basically means “kingship” or “royal rule.”
2. Kingdom involves 3 meanings:
  - a. Sovereign authority of a ruler;
  - b. Activity of ruling; &
  - c. Realm of rule including its benefits.
3. Kingdom of God refers to God’s sovereign activity of ruling over His creation.
4. “The kingdom of God is near” (Mark 1:15b) means that Jesus, the Agent of God’s rule, was present among the people.
5. “The kingdom of God is within (or among) you (or in your midst)” (Luke 17:21b) means Jesus was standing right in their midst. Some say that Jesus was “within your possession or within your reach.”
6. The “kingdom of God” concept was familiar to the Jews of Jesus’ day, in light of OT prophecy (Jeremiah 23:4–6; Micah 4:6–7; Zechariah 9:9–10; 14:9). They were expecting a future messianic (Davidic) kingdom to be established on earth (Matthew 20:21; Mark 15:43; Luke 1:33). So Jesus’ hearers naturally understood His reference to the kingdom of God to be the long-awaited messianic kingdom.
7. Jesus will return & set up His kingdom (Matthew 25:31, 34).

## 2 Aspects of the Kingdom of God (both centering on Jesus)

1. “Here & Now” Aspect  
It is already present, though veiled, as a spiritual realm (Mark 10:15; 12:34)
2. “There & Not Yet” Aspect  
It is still future when God’s rule will be openly established in earth (Mark 9:1; 13:24–27)

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## Kingdom of God Values

1. Values of the Kingdom of God can be seen in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5–7).
2. The Sermon on the Mount gives the “code of ethics” for those under the King, & shows how the community of God’s people are to live in the Kingdom.

**“Matthew 5–7 has often been said to be the blueprint for a Christian’s life of discipleship. It is also a good litmus test to tell whether the Kingdom of God is working its will in our lives.”**

Ben Witherington III

## Kingdom of God Values: Beatitudes

1. The beatitudes (Matt. 5:1-12) serve as a “preamble” to the Sermon on the Mount;
2. The beatitudes are like “BE-attitudes” (as Dave Andrews calls them); &
3. The beatitudes begin with the word “blessed” (from the Greek word *makarios*), meaning “happy,” “fortunate.”

| BEATITUDES                             | MEANING                                                                                                                                           |
|----------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Blessed are THE POOR or poor in spirit | <i>Not trusting in the riches that you possess or status that you have but instead in what God can give, thereby exhibiting humble dependence</i> |
| Blessed are those who MOURN            | <i>Caring enough to grieve for what is lost or without life in the world</i>                                                                      |

|                                                           |                                                                                                                                                              |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Blessed are the MEEK                                      | <i>Getting angry but never getting aggressive, understanding well that meekness does not mean weakness</i>                                                   |
| Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for RIGHTEOUSNESS | <i>Craving for fairness, justice, and holiness in a world filled with oppression, injustice, and wrongdoing (see Amos 5:11-15, 21-24 and Isaiah 1:11-17)</i> |
| Blessed are the MERCIFUL                                  | <i>Being compassionate to those in need with a deep understanding that “kindness” is something you need to love in itself (cf. Micah 6:8)</i>                |
| Blessed are the PURE in heart                             | <i>Having a heart that is after God’s own heart: self-less, godly, and genuine (cf. Psalms 24:3-4, Romans 12:1)</i>                                          |
| Blessed are the PEACEMAKERS                               | <i>Not only being at peace, but working for peace among people at war with each other</i>                                                                    |
| Blessed are those PERSECUTED for righteousness            | <i>Suffering for doing what is good and standing up for what is right</i>                                                                                    |

## Sermon on the Mount Values

Using the “you have heard that it was said” and “but I tell you” pattern in Matthew 5:21–48, we see kingdom values of holiness toward others:

1. Anger is already murder (v. 21–25);
2. Lust is actually in the eyes (vv. 27–30);
3. Divorce is not God’s option (vv. 31–32);
4. Making sacred vows is not at all necessary (vv. 33–37);
5. Revenge should, by all means, be reversed (vv. 38–42); &
6. Enemies ought to be loved, not just one’s neighbors (vv. 43–47).

In Matthew 6:1–24, we see kingdom values of spiritual devotion to God.

| SPIRITUAL ACTIVITIES                                                     | MEANING                                                                                                                      |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Discretely give to people in need (v. 1-4)                               | <i>Spirituality that is for God’s eyes only, being satisfied enough with His attention</i>                                   |
| Pray to express, not to impress (v. 5-15)                                | <i>Spirituality that simply seeks to express one’s thoughts to God, not using it as a tool to impress and manipulate Him</i> |
| Fasting is not for boasting (v. 16-18)                                   | <i>Spirituality that does not show-off and attracts attention to itself</i>                                                  |
| Treasure God much more than money or possessions, i.e. Mammon (v. 19-24) | <i>Spirituality that treasures God more than anything else</i>                                                               |



SESSION 4

# **TRANSFORMATION:** **THE KEY TO LIVING BIBLICALLY**

# EXAMINE

## 3 INTERWOVEN STAGES IN UNDERSTANDING TRANSFORMATION

### 1. Transformation by the renewing of our mind (HEAD)

*“Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and prove what God’s will is – His good, pleasing, and perfect will.” (Romans 12:2)*

**“metamorphosis” = total change**

### 2. Application of truth from the Bible to situations & decisions that we encounter in life (HAND); &

### 3. Alignment of our heart & emotion to God’s will (HEART).

*“I desire to do Your will, O my God; Your law is within my heart.”  
(Psalm 40:8)*

**Our prayer is to be able to say,  
“Your will is my delight!”**

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## KEY TO THE 3 INTERWOVEN STAGES OF TRANSFORMATION: YIELDEDNESS



1. Yieldedness makes us willing to DISCOVER God (His truth & will);
2. Yieldedness makes us willing to DECIDE to do His will & apply God's truth; &
3. Yieldedness makes us willing to DESIRE God (His truth & His will)

Yieldedness enables us to say to God, "Not my will, Lord, but Yours be done."

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## **MAJOR ATTRACTION IN SOCIETY THAT NEEDS TRANSFORMATION & YIELDEDNESS**

### **CONSUMERISM (“I shop, therefore I am”)**

**“The systematic creation and encouragement of the desire to possess material goods and personal success in ever greater amounts.”**

Timothy V. Vaverek

A consumerist lifestyle is “living in a manner that is measured by ‘having’ rather than ‘being’” (Richard Neuhaus ).

“We buy things we don’t need with money we don’t have to impress people we don’t like.”

In a consumerist world, “You are only as good as your latest purchase.”

## **LIVING BIBLICALLY: INTERWOVEN RELATIONSHIP OF GOD’S TRUTH & WILL & OUR RESPONSE TO GOD**

1. Our **DISCOVERY** of God makes us encounter truth & grow in **APTITUDE** (Head);
2. Our **DECISION** to do God’s will makes us experience the truth & moves us to **ACTION** (Hand); &
3. Our **DESIRE** for God makes us excited about the truth & changes our **ATTITUDE** (Heart).

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KEY CHARACTER TRAIT FOR TRANSFORMATION &  
YIELDEDNESS: **HUMILITY**

**“I used to think that God’s gifts were on shelves one above the other and that the taller we grew in Christian character, the more easily we should reach them. I find now that God’s gifts are on shelves one beneath the other and that is not a question of growing taller, but of stooping lower and that we have to go down, always down to get His best ones.”**

F.B. Meyer

**TWO ASPECTS OF HUMILITY**

1. Humility before God; &
2. Humility before others.

**HUMILITY BEFORE GOD**

**1. APTITUDE:**

About God: “God is POWERFUL & ADEQUATE.”

About us: “We are powerless & inadequate.”

**2. ATTITUDE:** SUBMISSION to God

**3. ACTION:** OBEDIENCE to God

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## MODEL OF HUMILITY BEFORE GOD: JESUS CHRIST

*“Abba, Father. . . Everything is possible for You. Take this cup from Me. Yet not what I will, but what You will.” (Mark 14:36)*

*“If you obey My commands, you will remain in My love, just as I obeyed My Father’s commands & remain in His love” (John 15:10)*

*“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. . .” (Philippians 2:5-7a)*

## HUMILITY BEFORE OTHERS

### 1. APTITUDE:

About others: “They are loved by God & are important to God.”

About us in relation to others: “We are called to love others & to value them.”

### 2. ATTITUDE: Consider Others Better than Ourselves

*“. . . but in humility consider others better than yourselves.”  
(Philippians 2:3b)*

### 3. ACTION: Selflessness

*“Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. . .”  
(Philippians 2:3a)*

*“Each of you should look not only for your own interests, but also to the interests of others.” (Philippians 2:4)*

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## MODEL OF HUMILITY BEFORE OTHERS: JESUS CHRIST

*“Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who. . .taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself & became obedient to death – even death on a cross! Therefore, God exalted Him to the highest place & gave Him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven & on earth & under the earth, & every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”  
(Philippians 2:5-7a)*

## MAJOR ATTRACTION IN SOCIETY THAT NEEDS TRANSFORMATION & HUMILITY

### CONVENIENCE (the Pursuit of Hassle-free Living)

Being spared as much as possible from any hint of discomfort, delay, and disservice has become an indispensable human right.

People feel entitled to have things done the way they want it at the exact moment they need it. People demand to be put at ease and to be pleased.

**“We have become such a nation of self-lovers. Nothing is too sacred to leave –if we don’t like it. We leave school if it gets boring or difficult; we leave home and parents if we are displeased; we leave our jobs, our marriages, and [even] our churches.”**

Peter Gillquist

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**“What more perfect illustration of inconvenience is there than the Incarnation, that God would leave the perfection of heaven to become a man and walk with us through the mess of our lives, even submitting to the most terrible ‘inconvenience’ of all: the crucifixion. Convenience is nothing less than a heresy that runs contrary to some of the most fundamental aspects of what it means to be a follower of Christ.”**

Peter Chin

## **LIVING BIBLICALLY WHEN THE VALUES OF THE KINGDOM ON EARTH & THE KINGDOM OF GOD CLASH**

**“I believe that one reason why the church of God at this present moment has so little influence over the world is because the world has so much influence over the church.”**

Charles Spurgeon

**“Every day, the church is becoming more like the world it allegedly seeks to change.”**

George Barna

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## **TWO ALTERNATIVES IN DEALING WITH THE CLASH OF KINGDOM VALUES**

1. When we don't discern the clash of values, we **CONFORM** our values with the kingdom of men, & we **COMPROMISE** the values of the Kingdom of God.
2. When we discern the clash of values, we **TRANSFORM** the values of the kingdom of men by **REJECTING** these values & **REVERSING** them with the values of the Kingdom of God. (COUNTER-INTUITIVE; COUNTER-CULTURAL)

### **REVERSAL OF OLD & NEW VALUES**

1. "Old" values represent the values of the kingdom of men (or kingdom on earth), while "new" values represent the values of the Kingdom of God (or kingdom of heaven).
2. Rhoads calls the "old" values "what people want for themselves" or "saving one's life out of fear," & calls the "new" values "what God wants for people" or "losing one's life for others out of faith."

### **REVERSAL OF OLD & NEW VALUES IN THE GOSPEL OF MARK**

1. Reversal from doing the family's will to "doing the will of God" (3:35);
2. Reversal from hearing Jesus' words with hardness of heart & misunderstanding to "hearing & accepting it" (4:20);
3. Reversal from living with "fear" (4:40), unbelief, & disobedience to living in "faith," prayer (1:35), & obedience;

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4. Reversal from walking with hypocrisy according to the “traditions of men” to walking with compassion in the words & “commandments of God.” (7:9, 13);
  5. Reversal from “setting the mind on the things of men” to “setting the mind on things of God” (8:33);
  6. Reversal from “saving” one’s life to “losing” it for the sake of Jesus & the gospel (8:35);
  7. Reversal from being ashamed of Jesus & His words to finding honor in being identified with Jesus & His words (8:9, 38);
  8. Reversal from being “first” to being “last of all & servant of all” (9:35);
  9. Reversal from showing loyalty to one’s “great possessions” to showing loyalty to God in gaining “treasure in heaven” (10:21) “for the sake of Jesus & the gospel” (10:29);
  10. Reversal from harming or causing other people to stumble (9:42) to being at peace with them (9:50); &
  11. Reversal from “lording” it over others (10:42) to being a “slave of all”(10:44);

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## TRIAD OF QUESTIONS TO ASK IN ANY SITUATION IN ORDER TO LIVE BIBLICALLY

### 1. WHAT IS GOING ON IN THIS SITUATION?

Our reflection needs to focus on the specific events & interactions occupying center stage in our understanding of the situation, without losing sight of the larger patterns of events & interactions that provide their context.

### 2. HOW IS GOD INVOLVED IN WHAT IS GOING ON?

*“They did not ask, ‘Where is the Lord, who brought us up out of Egypt. . .?’” (Jeremiah 2:6a)*

*“The priests did not ask, ‘Where is the Lord?’” (Jer. 2:8a)*

*“My people have committed 2 sins: They have forsaken Me, the spring of living water, & have dug their own cisterns that cannot hold water” (Jer. 2:13)*

Key Question: “Where is the Lord in our situation?”

### 3. WHAT IS A FITTING RESPONSE TO WHAT IS GOING ON?

#### TRUTH:

What response would best serve the truth in this situation?

How is truth being evaded, distorted, or denied in what is going on?  
What truth needs to be told & recognized?

How might Christian ministry here make manifest the prophetic work of the One is the Truth?

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**WAY:**

What response would best serve to overcome fault in this situation – both the “fault” of wrongdoing & the “fault” or rupture of relationships that is both consequence & cause of our misdoings?

How might Christian ministry here make manifest the priestly work of the One is the Way?

**LIFE:**

What response would best serve the flourishing of relationships & the well-being of people in this situation?

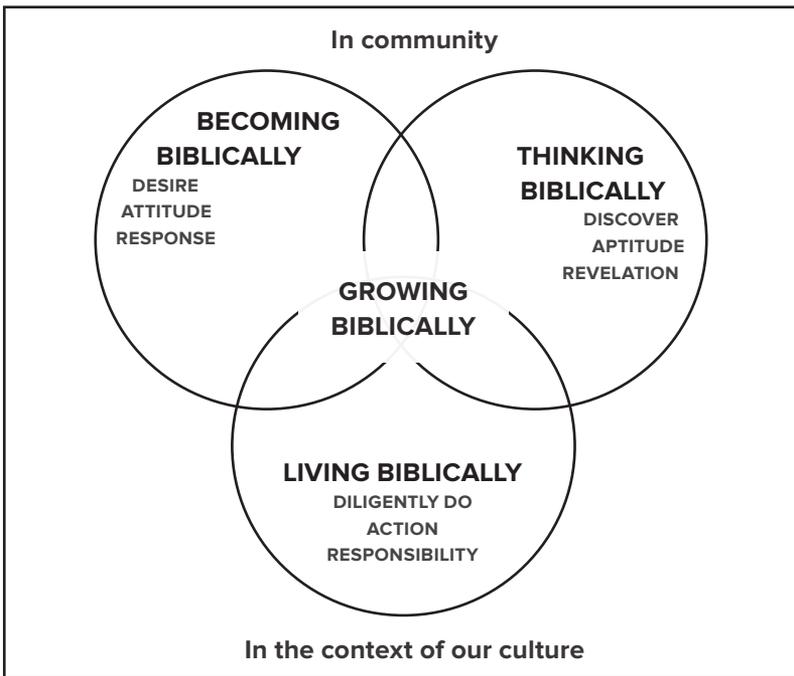
What response to what is going on would be in accord with God’s freeing, empowering, & life-giving involvement?

How might Christian ministry here make manifest the redeeming work of the One is the Life?

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## TRIAD OF QUESTIONS FOR SELF-REFLECTION

1. What is going on with you as you consider this situation?
2. How is God involved in what is going on with you in this process?
3. How might you respond to what is going on with you?



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## 4 VALUES FILIPINOS REGARD AS LOVING IN RELATIONSHIPS

### I. Regard for our Kapwa

**Kapwa**, which is literally rendered as “of the same nature,” “of equal status,” “a partnership,” and “a shared orientation,” refers to our *pamantayang pang-ugnayan* (“relational standard”).

**Kapwa** is the consciousness of our reciprocally shared identities.

### EIGHT LEVELS OF RELATING WITH PEOPLE (V. ENRIQUEZ)

**Ibang Tao** or “outsider” category

1. pakikitungo - “amenities, civility”
2. pakikisalamuha - “mixing”
3. pakikilahok - “joining, participating”
4. pakikibagay - “conforming”
5. pakikisama - “adjusting”

**Hindi Ibang Tao** or “one-of-us” category

6. pakikipagpalagayang-loob - “mutual trust or rapport”
7. pakikisangkot - “getting involved”
8. pakikiisa - “fusion, oneness, full trust”

### II. Regard for Others’ Kalooban

**Kalooban** or loob, the inner self, is the core of one’s personhood and where the true worth of a person lies (J. de Mesa).

**Loob** is the Filipino’s notion of selfhood in its holistic interior dimension under the principle of harmony (L. Mercado).

## POSITIVE EXPRESSIONS OF LOOB

|                         |                                             |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| 1. Mababang-loob        | Meek, humble, modest<br>(pagkamapagkumbaba) |
| 2. Malakas ang loob     | Bold, adventurous, valorous                 |
| 3. Masayang kalooban    | Cheerful disposition                        |
| 4. Matatag ang kalooban | Strong will                                 |
| 5. Magaan ang loob      | Willingness, grace                          |

## NEGATIVE EXPRESSIONS OF LOOB

|                    |                                           |
|--------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| 1. Tigas ng loob   | Hardness of heart                         |
| 2. Sama ng loob    | Hurt or offended feelings;<br>ill-will    |
| 3. Laban sa loob   | Grudgingly, unwillingly,<br>involuntarily |
| 4. Mabigat sa loob | Sad, dispirited, heavy-hearted            |
| 5. Mapait sa loob  | Bitterness                                |

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### III. Regard for Others' Damdamin

***Damdamin**, which is our pamantayang pangkalooban (emotional standard) accounts for much of our being personal and sensitive as Filipinos in almost all we do.*

***Damdamin** as inner criterion to comprehend events and people (e.g., “sa pakiramdam ko”)*

***Damdamin** as gut feel to evaluate people and assess situations (e.g. dating)*

### IV. Regard for our Hiya

***Hiya** is a norm (or rule of conduct) that supports our damdamin in seeking not to hurt the feelings of others and in minimizing (if not avoiding) conflicts.*

*As a norm, **hiya** prescribes how we should behave in relation to one another in a specific situation or condition, so that we do not offend each other's feelings.*

*Thus, **hiya** is concern for others and sensitivity to their feelings.*

### DESCRIPTION OF HIYA

1. **Hiya** is positive, not negative
2. **Hiya** is not concealed dishonesty

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## 2A. Six possible meanings of the Filipino “yes” (Jocano)

We say “yes”:

1. when we do not know;
2. when we want to impress;
3. when we are annoyed;
4. when we want to end the conversation;
5. when we half-understand the instruction or the topic discussed; and
6. when we think we know better than the one speaking.

## 2b. Five categories of 12 “yes”/”no” answers (P. Covar)

First category: *Tiyak na Oo* (Definite Yes)

- a) *oo* (yes)
- b) *tiyak* (certainly)
- c) *sigurado* (surely)

Second category: *Alanganing Oo* (Indefinite Yes)

- a) *malamang* (most likely)
- b) *siguro* (maybe)
- c) *marahil* (maybe)
- d) *baka* (perhaps)

Third category: *Pag-aalinglangan* (Indecision)

- a) *titingnan ko* (I’ll see)
- b) *bahala na* (come what may)
- c) *maalaman na* (will be known)

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Fourth category: *Alanganing Hindi* (Indefinite No)

a) *aywan* (don't know)

Fifth category: *Tiyak na Hindi* (Definite No)

a) *hindi* (No)

## **UNDERSTANDING THE FILIPINO “YES”**

The Filipino tendency to say “yes” may generally come out of the desire to protect or “save our face,” out of our sensitivity for others, and out of our politeness in not wanting to hurt their feelings (and our own feelings).

## PRAYER FOR LIVING BIBLICALLY

*May our gracious, good, & glorious Father empower us by His Spirit to develop a lifelong passion for Jesus, being attentive to the fulness of the Godhead, so that we may always seek to understand & apply God's Word daily, & be enabled to distinguish light from darkness, truth from error, best from better, righteousness from unrighteousness, purity from defilement. As servants of God, may we heed His call for us to guard the precious deposit of the gospel that He has entrusted to us, in order to give Him glory through the discipline of living biblically.*

*May we continue to be transformed by His Spirit, so that we may have the discernment & wisdom how to do His will in our daily life and relationships. May we continue to grow to be more like Jesus, in thinking biblically, becoming biblically, & living biblically. May we always be found using our lives to serve God by serving others. Amen!*





