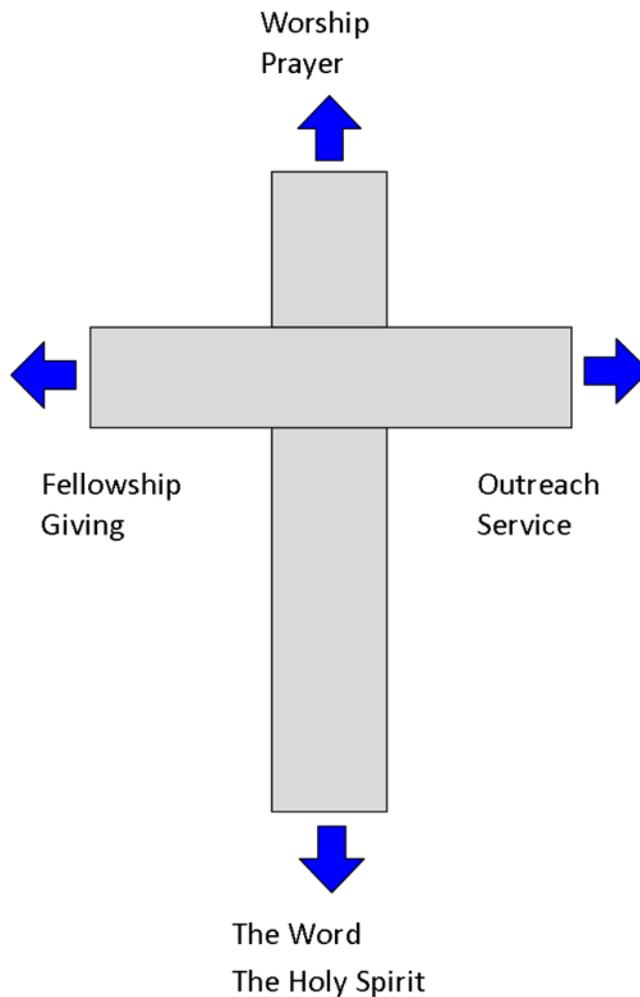


The Divine Design For *The Christian Life*



Chris Losey

Thanks for your interest in

The Divine Design
for
The Christian Life

It is my hope that the information in this booklet will give you a clearer understanding of what the Bible teaches about key facets of the Christian life.

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Chris grew up in Calistoga, California. He received his Bachelor of Science degree from the United States Military Academy at West Point, New York, in 1973. After serving for five years as an infantry



officer in the Army, he resigned his commission and returned to school receiving his Master of Divinity degree from Western Conservative Baptist Seminary in Portland, Oregon in 1982. After graduation Chris returned to the military where he served as a chaplain in the Air Force retiring in 1994. Since then he and his wife Sharon have ministered at Valley Baptist Church in San Rafael, California, where Chris serves as senior pastor. Chris and Sharon have been married for over 38 years and have two children, Christine and Rob, and four grandchildren.

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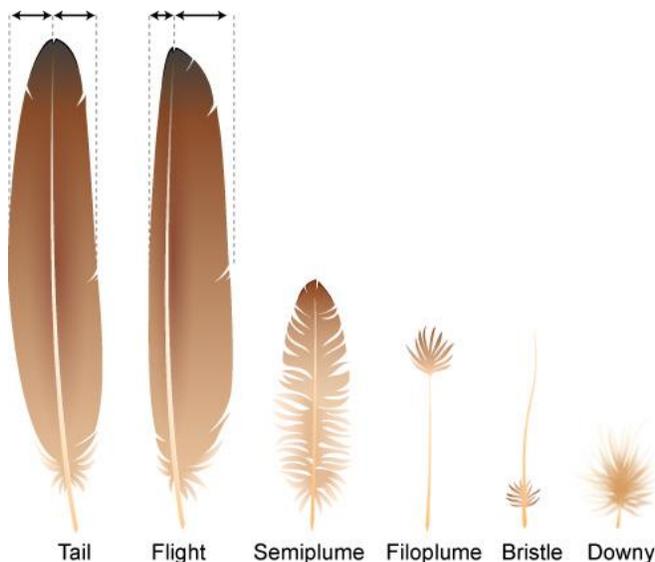
**Dedicated to those who want to learn
how to live a balanced Christian life.**

The Divine Design for the Christian Life

God's design in the physical realm

When a person looks around the amazing world we live in, it is easy to believe it was designed by God. For example, the leaves on trees all have their own unique designs and colors. Flowers have beautiful intricate designs, too, with many having their own fragrant scents. The human body is a picture of remarkable design with numerous systems that work in harmony. The digestive system takes in nutrients and eliminates waste. The circulatory system takes oxygen to the cells and removes harmful by-products. The immune system fights disease. The endocrine system manages the body's hormones. The nervous system makes it so we can feel sensations... Humans can see, hear, taste, smell, and feel. Indeed, as Psalm 139 :13,14 states, we are fearfully and wonderfully made. The human body is the epitome of divine design.

I recently found a feather in my neighborhood and decided to investigate its design. In my research I discovered the stunning complexity of feathers.



For example, there are over **twelve different types of feathers**. Perhaps the best known is the flight feather. The structure of this feather is incredible. Each feather has a strong, hollow **shaft** also known as the quill or vein. It is curved or bowed slightly back. It also tapers, being larger close to the bird's body and smaller at the

tip. The shaft has **barbs** coming off of it at a diagonal angle toward the tip of the feather. The barbs have **barbules** coming off of them. The barbules have tiny **hooks** that connect to the adjacent barb giving the appearance that the wing is one piece. The barbs are thus hooked together making the entire feather function as a single unit. When a bird flies in extremely rough weather, the hooks linking the barbs can come loose so that the bird's wings are not overstressed or damaged. The hooks can be reattached when the bird lands and preens itself. The feathers are also designed to give lift to the bird when it flies. This happens because the barbs or branches on the leading edge of the feather are shorter than the barbs or branches on the trailing edge. This allows air on the top of the feather to flow faster than the air underneath creating lift. Feathers are also designed to reduce turbulence in flight. Tendons in the bird's wing allow the bird to do various maneuvers needed for takeoff and landing. In short the flight feather is perfectly designed so birds can fly.

These feathers could not have evolved because they needed to be perfect from the beginning in order for a bird to fly. Anything less than perfection would not have given the bird an advantage, and thus would not have been passed to the next generation in any so called evolutionary process. This is strong evidence for special creation and against evolution.

The amazing design found in things in the physical realm brings to mind Romans 1:20 "For since the creation of the world His (God's) invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse." The verse indicates that when people see the world around them and the incredible way it is designed, and still reject God, they are without excuse, because the design in the physical realm is

ample proof of God's existence in the spiritual realm. People who wonder if there is a God need to open their eyes and look around. His fingerprint is everywhere!

Design in the spiritual realm

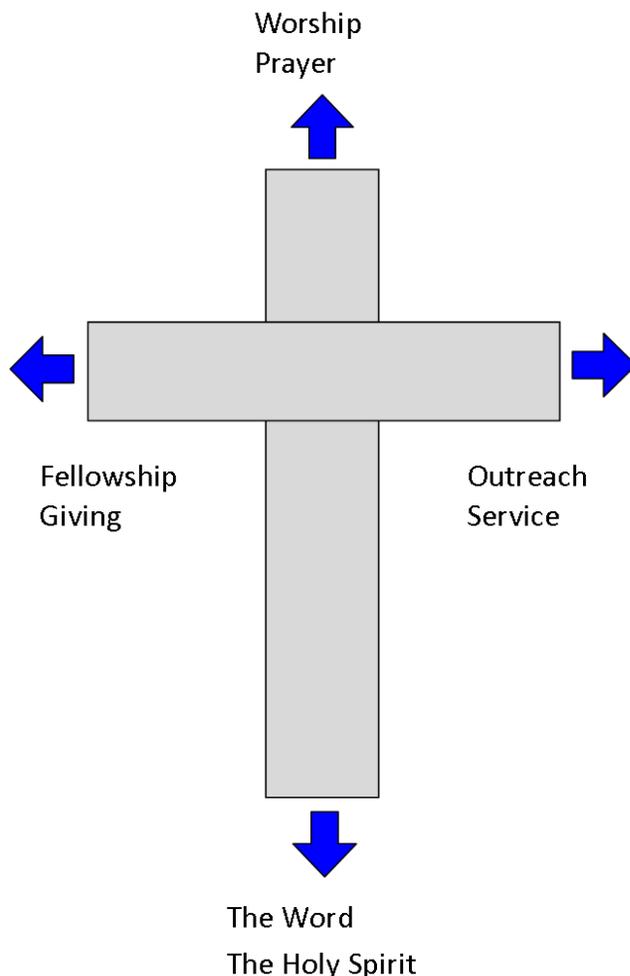
In the same way that God designed things to work well in the physical realm, He divinely designed the spiritual realm. To understand this it is helpful to define the word "design." Design (as a noun) is defined by Webster's dictionary as "the order or arrangement of the components or details of something in accordance with a plan." In other words to say that God has a design for the Christian life is to say that He has arranged various components and details in accordance with a plan to help Christians be successful. If we bring our lives into conformity with God's divine design we can be assured that we will function in the best way possible.

In this regard, I want to show you what I call "The Divine Design for the Christian Life." God's design is in the form of a cross. Just as Jesus died on a cross as a sacrifice for us, we have the privilege of sacrificially living a cross-like life that honors Him and advances His Kingdom. **Romans 12:1 (NASB)** states, "Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, *which is* your spiritual service of worship." According to this verse we are to present our bodies to God as living sacrifices. If He gets our bodies He gets all of us because our bodies house our spirit and soul. If we adopt God's design as our own, we will not just be living sacrifices, but holy sacrifices.

Our motive for presenting ourselves as living, holy sacrifices is God's mercy toward us. Since He was merciful and saved us from Hell, we should respond by living wholeheartedly for Him.

Looking at how the Christian life resembles a cross

A cross has two axes; a vertical axis representing our relationship with God, and a horizontal axis representing our relationship with one another. We reach up to God and out to our fellow man. God also reaches down to us.



As we look at God's divine design for our lives, I invite you to ask yourself, "Does my life resemble this design?" In other words is each part of this cross part of my life or are there changes I need to make?

Let's begin with the vertical part of the cross which represents our relationship with God.

Worship

Notice at the top of the cross is the word *worship*. Christians are to worship God. In essence we send our worship up to Him.

There are many verses on worship. Here are two encouraging ones.

Psalm 2:11 states, "Worship the LORD with reverence and rejoice with trembling. **Psalms 95:6** states, "Come, let us worship and bow down, let us kneel before the Lord our Maker."

It is appropriate that the first part of God's design for the Christian life is worship. Notice that Psalm 2:11 indicates that we are to worship reverently. We also are to rejoice when we worship. We must come before God with great joy in our hearts because of all He has done for us. The rejoicing and reverence are to be done with trembling; a sense of fear. Even though God is our friend, He is Almighty God. When we approach Him we need to show great respect.

Are you a person who has made worshipping God a priority? Do you worship at the church of your choice on Sunday with an attitude of deep reverence and joy? Are you truly thankful for all God has done for you? Do you come with appropriate fear realizing God is God Almighty, or do you come with a casual attitude more concerned about the friends you will see than God who deserves your true worship?

Psalm 95:3 speaks of coming to God in humility. We bow down and kneel before our Maker. We worship God individually, but we also worship corporately. It was the pattern of the early church to gather together to worship God. That is what we still do on Sunday mornings.

I was talking to someone recently who claimed to be a Christian and I asked him what church he attended. He said he didn't go to church even though he believed in God. I told him that Scripture tells us not to neglect the assembling of ourselves together as some people are in the habit of doing. **Hebrews 10:24-25 (NASB)** states, "²⁴ And let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, ²⁵ not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near." Since

Christ's return is immanent, we need to encourage other believers to stay strong in the faith. Part of this is being a regular worshipper.

I also told the person the story about the farmer who had not been to church for a long time. His pastor stopped by the farmer's house on a cold winter evening. Surprised to see the pastor, the farmer invited him in to sit by the fire. They enjoyed some casual conversation and then sat in silence watching the flames lick the stone wall of the fireplace. Unexpectedly the pastor rose from his chair and without saying a word, went over to the fireplace, took the fireplace tongs, reached into the fire and removed a red-hot coal. He then set the coal on the stone hearth in front of the fireplace, and returned to his seat. Curious and speechless the farmer sat looking at the red-hot coal. It slowly changed color from red to gray to black. Its heat quickly dissipated into the floor and cool surrounding air. The farmer looked on in silence as the pastor again arose, took tongs and moved the black coal from the floor to the fire placing it amidst a group of red coals. It wasn't long before the coal went from black to gray to red. The heat of the other coals brought the dark coal back to life. It was red hot again. After a pause, the farmer turned toward the pastor and said, "Pastor, I will be in church this Sunday."

The moral of the story is clear. In order to stay hot for the things of God, we need to be in worship where the positive influence of others can help keep us fired-up spiritually. During worship, Christians:

- Praise God together through song
- Participate in corporate prayer

- Greet and encourage fellow Christians
- Hear messages that encourage them in their walk with God
- Learn about new prayer needs
- Take communion together....
- Have the opportunity to give towards God's work

Worship is an essential part of God's divine design for the Christian life. If we want to get aligned with God's will, we need to worship God regularly. That is what millions of believers do in thousands of churches across our country and around the world every Sunday.

This is not to say that people can't worship individually in the forest, on a mountain top, or in their backyard, but worshipping with other believers is imperative. This happens most often in scheduled worship services.

Prayer

A second aspect of God's divine design for the Christian life is prayer. It is on the vertical axis because we send our prayers up to God. One set of verses that address prayer are the favorite verses of many Christians. ***Philippians 4:6-7*** states, "⁶ Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." Rather than being anxious about things we are to take them to the Lord in prayer in order to receive His inner peace that surpasses all comprehension. This peace will guard our minds.

Another great verse on prayer is **1 Thessalonians 5:17** which says, "Pray without ceasing." Indeed we are to pray without ceasing. This doesn't mean we go around all day on our knees, but instead we need to be in an attitude of prayer to be ready to fire prayers up to heaven at a moment's notice.

Prayer certainly is a vital part of the Christian life. Jesus taught His disciples to pray. We often refer to this prayer as the Lord's prayer or the Disciple's prayer. It is found in **Matthew 6:9-13 (NASB)**,

⁹"Pray, then, in this way: 'Our Father who is in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. ¹⁰'Your kingdom come. Your will be done, On earth as it is in heaven. ¹¹'Give us this day our daily bread. ¹²'And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. ¹³'And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.'

Notice that Jesus says we are to **pray in this way**, not necessarily with these words. When Jesus' prayer is examined closely, five facets stand out. They are praise, progress, provision, purity, and protection, and then back to praise.

- **Praise** – our Father who art in heaven hallowed be Your name
- **Progress** – Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth...
- **Provision** – Give us this day our daily bread
- **Purity** – Forgive us our debts as we also have forgiven our debtors
- **Protection** – Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil
- **Praise** – For Thine is the Kingdom, power, and glory forever AMEN

Many Christians aren't sure how to pray to God. Although there is no one way to pray, Jesus prayer gives a great example of how to pray comprehensively. It starts with **praise**. We praise God for who He is and thank Him for what He has done. He is holy, loving, just, faithful, omniscient, omnipresent, omnipotent, forgiving, merciful, and gracious. He has blessed us with every spiritual blessing (Eph 1). To those who place their faith in Him, He redeems them from the pit and gives them salvation. He also gives them His Holy Spirit to dwell inside and guide them. Praising and thanking God is the best way to start a time of prayer. It shows God that we acknowledge Him as God and realize how important He is in our lives.

Next we are to pray for the **progress** of God's kingdom; that it would come and that His will would be done on earth as it is in heaven. To pray for the progress of God's kingdom is to pray for anything that moves ministry forward. We can pray for weekly worship services asking God to prompt people to come and have their lives changed. We can pray for our own evangelism efforts and those of missionaries around the world. We can pray for children's ministries, youth, singles, men's and women's ministries. We can pray that Christians would see and respond to any divine appointments God brings their way. We can pray for Christian radio, television, and movies that these be used mightily to bring people to Christ. The ways to pray for the progress of God's Kingdom are endless.

Praying for the progress of God's kingdom shows God that we are concerned about His agenda and the things that will further His influence around the world.

Next we are to pray for **provision**; that God would meet people's physical, financial, emotional, and spiritual needs. It is interesting that most prayer meetings often consist of **provision prayers**. This is the wrong place to start. It is only after praising God and praying for the progress of His Kingdom that we should focus on our needs. It is important to always seek God's face through praise, and His Kingdom through progress, before seeking His hand by asking Him to meet the needs of people. Praying Jesus' helps us maintain the priorities.

When praying for provision we can pray for people who need healing. We can pray for those who need financial help. We can pray for those who need housing, a job, comfort, or help of any kind. This type of prayer keeps our focus on the needs of others as well as our own needs.

Next comes praying for **purity**. Here we confess our sins to God and ask Him to cleanse us. Here we ask God to forgive us just as we have forgiven others. God can prompt us to forgive someone we hold a grudge against. We can pray, "Lord, show me anyone who I have not forgiven." If He brings someone to mind, you can pray and get things right with them.

The fifth area to pray for is **protection**. Here we ask God to deliver us from evil. We can ask Him to protect our church, families, moms and dads. We can ask Him to help us not give in to evil or temptations, but to stand strong in His Word. We can pray for protection for marriages,

for church staff members, and for our military members away from home.

Jesus' prayer ends full circle by going back to **praise**, "For Yours is the Kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

Praying this way using the five Ps – Praise, Progress, Provision, Purity and Protection, is an awesome way to approach God. It can revolutionize a person's prayer life. It is not enough to understand the five P's or even be able to explain them to someone else. It is only enough if we use them in our own personal prayer life.

It has been said that prayer is our lifeline to God. Through prayer we:

- Praise God
- Pray for the advancement of His Kingdom
- Lift up each other's needs before God
- Confess sin
- Experience the peace that passes understanding
- Ask for things like wisdom, protection and strength
- Pray against the devil's schemes
- See God answer our prayers

Prayer is an awesome privilege. Rather than not wanting to hear from us, God invites us to pray. What a personal God we serve!!!

When we pray sometimes we get the green light and God quickly answers our prayers in the affirmative. Sometimes we get the red light,

where God says no, and does not give us the answer we desire. After all, He knows best. Sometimes we get the yellow light where He says wait. Whatever light we get, God answers prayer.

The Word

Just as we reach up to God through worship and prayer, God reaches down to us through His Word. **2 Timothy 2:15** states, “Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.” We are to present ourselves approved to God as workman who know His Word and handle it correctly. It takes a lot of work to become proficient in the Word. There are no shortcuts. Each person must work hard by studying the Word and meditating on it to know what it says and means.

Psalm 119:11 states, “Your word I have treasured in my heart, that I may not sin against You.” God wants us to treasure His Word in our hearts so it will help keep us from sin. To treasure means to hold something in high esteem; to cherish it. In order to treasure the Word, we have to get it into our minds first and then transfer it to our hearts where our true value system resides. We need to obey it!

Not only do we have the privilege of treasuring God’s Word in our hearts, but God’s Word is a treasure. Through it we learn His will in different areas of life, gain great wisdom, and have our lives transformed as we apply it.

The question is “Are we spending time in the Word of God?” It is not enough to read books about the Bible, we need to be in the pages of

the Bible. There are many ways to do this. Here are a few.

- Read a chapter a day in the Bible and meditate on what you read.
- Read through the Bible in a year by doing four chapters a day.
- Study a book of the Bible and outline it as you go. Perhaps do a one line summary of the chapter or pick out the main point and write it down.
- Read through the book of Proverbs studying the same chapter as the date on the calendar. For example on June 1, 2017, you would read chapter 1. On June 5 you would read chapter 5. Since Proverbs has 31 chapters, on a 31 day month you could read through the entire book.

The possible ways to get into the Word are endless. The key is to be consistent.

One great way of studying the Bible is to read it and then ask the following questions:

1. What is the overall thrust of the passage?
2. Is there an example to follow?
3. Is there a sin to avoid?
4. Is there a promise to claim?
5. Is there a command to obey?
6. What can I learn from it and apply to my own life?

The Holy Spirit

Besides sending His Word down to us, God also sends His Spirit. The

Christian life is more than worship, prayer and studying God's Word. Part of God's divine design for the Christian life is for Christians to learn to "walk by the Spirit" which means "to live moment by moment in" the power of the Spirit. After all, as Christians we are indwelt by the Spirit when we ask Christ into our lives. We need to hear His promptings as He works through our conscience and prompts us to do certain things and to avoid others. **Galatians 5:16** states, "But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh." When we are controlled by the Spirit we don't fall into sin by carrying out the desires of our flesh. Instead, the Spirit guides and directs us into the things of God that lead to life.

The Spirit also produces amazing fruit in our lives. This attractive to others. **Galatians 5:22-23** states, "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law." It is the Spirit who makes us the kind of people others want to be around. There are laws against a lot of things, but no one makes laws that say a person shouldn't be loving, joyful, patient, kind, good, faithful, gentle, or self-controlled.

The Spirit also gives us spiritual gifts that enable us to serve one another. **1 Corinthians 12:7 (NASB)** states, "But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good."

In the Bible there are four commands regarding the Spirit. Two are positive and two are negative. They help us obey God in day-to-day life, and avoid the traps of the evil one. When we learn the commands we are better prepared for the spiritual battle that rages around us. The

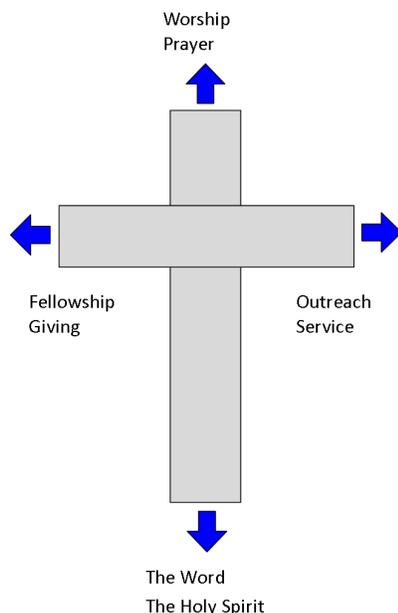
four commands are:

- **Be filled with the Spirit – Ephesians 5:18 (NASB)** states. “And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit. We are to be controlled by the Spirit’s promptings. The word “filled” is in the present tense. It means “be being kept filled all the time.” The word “filled” could also be translated “controlled by”. Rather than being controlled by an external substance like alcohol or drugs that we ingest, we are to allow the indwelling Holy Spirit to control us through our conscience and mind. It sounds a little twilight-zone-ish, but it really is quite straight forward. For example, a person suddenly might be faced with an unexpected temptation. As he contemplates what to do he senses the Holy Spirit prompting him to immediately leave the area. He now has a choice. Will he obey the prompting and leave, or will he ignore the prompting and stay? If he obeys and leaves he will undoubtedly avoid some unforeseen heartache. If he stays, he will likely regret it later.
- **Walk by the Spirit – Galatians 5:16 (NASB)** states, “But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh.” To walk by the Spirit means to live for Him every step you take. This command is closely connected with the “be filled” command. When we allow the Spirit to fill us, we will walk (live) every moment obeying Him. The flesh and the Spirit are at war, and we need to side with the Spirit if we hope to keep ourselves pure and impact the world for Christ.
- **Don’t grieve the Spirit – Ephesians 4:30 (NASB)** states, “Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the

day of redemption.” To grieve means to make sad. We must not sadden the Spirit by disobeying Him. If we do fall into sin we need to quickly confess it, and recommit ourselves to follow the Spirit once again.

- **Don't quench the Spirit – 1 Thessalonians 5:19 (NASB)** states, “Do not quench the Spirit.” To quench means to extinguish or to put out. For example when we get thirsty we put out the thirst by drinking water. In essence our thirst is extinguished. As Christians we put out the Spirit's internal fire by repeatedly doing things that make Him sad. Rather than disobedience we need to be obedient so we fan the flame and become red-hot like the coal in the fireplace.

Learning to live in the power of the Holy Spirit is an important part of God's divine design for the Christian life. One way to help this happen is to study and meditate on Scripture. The more we learn from God's Word, the more of it the Spirit can bring to mind and use to guide us.



A second way to help ourselves be guided by the Spirit is to pray each day something like, “Lord, help me listen to Your promptings today. Help me obey those promptings whether it is to do something You want me to do, or to avoid something You want me to avoid.”

Now let's shift from the vertical axis of God's divine design to the horizontal axis where we reach out to other Christians as well as the lost.

The first element on the horizontal axis is fellowship.

Fellowship

Fellowship is the Greek word *koinonia*. Someone said that fellowship is like having a bunch of Christians on the same ship. In this case the ship is the body of Christ, the church. Fellowship happens best in a small group setting where Christians get together in groups to interact, share, pray for each other and build relationships. **Acts 2:42** states, “They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.”

Fellowship is actually defined in this verse as ‘the breaking of bread and prayer.’ Acts 2:42 states that the early Christians devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship. The next phrase in the verse is an appositive which explains what fellowship is, “to the breaking of bread and to prayer.” The breaking of bread is where people share food (perhaps a meal) together and talk to each other about what is going on in their lives. I believe that is one reason why God made our bodies to need food. At some point we have to get off the treadmill of work and recreation in order to eat. When we eat we talk and share. Based on the sharing there will undoubtedly be things to pray about, and that’s what happens next. Sharing leads naturally to prayer. I’m so glad God made us stop. If He hadn’t, it is likely that we would be less social than we are. So much socializing happens around food; it’s preparation, consumption, and the clean-up afterwards.

Hebrews 10:25 states, “Not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging *one another*; and all the more as you see the day drawing near.” This verse not only applies to worship

but to fellowship as well. We must be sure we don't neglect it. At the small group meetings in our home, we always start with some snacks as people arrive. After a warm hello at the door, people head for the food. As they nibble, the conversations go a mile a minute. People catch up on each other's families and lives in general. Much prayer material is gathered over veggies, dip, cookies and fruit!

To see if a person is in fellowship he can simply ask himself, "Am I involved in some kind of small group ministry where I am growing together with other Christians?"

Being in a small group allows a person to:

- build relationships with other Christians
- have a measure of accountability
- share prayer needs and pray for the needs of others
- ask questions and get the benefit of group interaction

God made us relational people. Often those who don't get involved in small group ministry don't stick around a church because they don't feel connected. Being involved in fellowship takes time and effort but it is well worth it.

Giving

Someone might say that this next part of God's design might go on the vertical axis, but it is something we do when we are in community, so I am placing it on the horizontal axis. Part of God's plan for all Christians is that they give to the Lord's work. That's why churches take offerings

on Sunday. Those offerings allow churches to have facilities where people can worship and meet for fellowship and instruction. Churches also need to pay staff and run ministries. Churches are not funded by government or special grants, but by the faithful giving of God's people.

Proverbs 3:9-10 states, “⁹ Honor the LORD from your wealth and from the first of all your produce; ¹⁰ So your barns will be filled with plenty and your vats will overflow with new wine.” Through giving we honor God. Giving is to be from the first of what we get, not from the leftovers. The example in the Old Testament was the tithe; the giving of a tenth. The tithe was instituted before the Law was given, so that even though we are not obligated to keep all of the Old Testament Jewish Law as Christians, we still are obligated to tithe. Even so, churches have no way of checking if people are tithing, nor should they. The tithe is between each person and God.

It is rather amazing to see that God blesses those who tithe. **Malachi 3:10 (NASB)** states, “Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, so that there may be food in My house, and test Me now in this,” says the LORD of hosts, “if I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you a blessing until it overflows.” Who wouldn't want some of this? We don't give to be blessed, but giving brings blessing.

In the Old Testament people also gave special offerings over and above the tithe. These offerings were voluntary. People were to participate in special offerings only as they felt led to do so.

A few times a year at our church we challenge the congregation with

offerings for special projects. These are not mandatory, but people still give generously.

2 Corinthians 9:7 states, “ Each one *must do* just as he has purposed in his heart, not grudgingly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.” This verse encourages Christians to purpose in their hearts to give, not grudgingly or under compulsion. God loves a cheerful giver.

When people give tithes and offerings, there is money to move ministry forward. When people don't give, churches have financial challenges.

Through giving, Christians have:

- the privilege of supporting God's work
- a stake in the life of the church
- the opportunity of seeing God bless them

Giving is an important part of God's divine design for the Christian life.

Service

The next part of God's divine design is service. Every believer is to serve in ministry. Notice that **Galatians 5:13** states, “For you were called to freedom, brethren; only *do not turn* your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.” As Christians we are free in Christ, but we are not to turn our freedom into feeding our flesh. Instead, out of gratitude for all God has done for us, we are to serve Him by serving one another.

Romans 12:6 goes on to say, “Since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, *each of us is to exercise them accordingly.*” Simply put, all believers are called to serve somewhere in ministry by exercising the spiritual gifts God has given to them. If you are not familiar with spiritual gifts I recommend the short book entitled [Understanding Spiritual Gifts](#). It is free to read or download at www.chrislosey.com. Under the drop down menu “Short Books” choose “Christian Life,” Under “Christian life” choose “Spiritual Gifts.”

Even if people have not yet discovered their spiritual gifts, I recommend that they serve by finding a ministry that interests them. Possibilities are children’s ministry, youth ministry, young adult ministry, men’s ministry, women’s ministry, music ministry, worship support, etc. Under each ministry there are undoubtedly places where a person can serve. Call the church office to find out who is in charge of the ministry that interests you. Next call them and ask if there are any service opportunities. Another way to find a place to serve is to set up a time to meet with a pastor and let them give suggestions and answer your questions.

Do you currently serve somewhere in ministry? The question is not, “Do you attend a ministry like a small group?” but instead, “Do you serve in ministry where you minister to others?” If so, great! If not, I encourage you to get plugged in soon. Also, even though you serve in ministry you may need to change ministries from time to time as God leads. Be open to whatever He has for you.

Outreach

The next element in God's divine design for Christians is outreach.

As **service** is often serving fellow Christians, **outreach** is reaching out to those who don't know Christ. The great news is that God empowers us to reach out. **Acts 1:8** states 'but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth.'" These were Jesus' words to His followers that He would send the Holy Spirit to empower them to be His witnesses. Indeed He sent the Spirit on the Day of Pentecost to empower them, and the same Spirit empowers us today.

Jesus gave the Great Commission in **Matthew 28:19**, "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit..." Part of the disciple making process is winning people to Christ. Only then can they be built up in the faith and sent out to win others.

One of the best ways to share your faith is to simply share the story of how you came to Christ. For more information on sharing your faith, I recommend you read the short book Relational Evangelism also found at www.Chrislosey.com. Under "Short Books" click "Evangelism/Outreach" and under "Evangelism/Outreach" choose "Relational Evangelism." Reading and studying this book will greatly help you share your faith with others effectively.

Have you been looking for opportunities to share your faith with others? Every Christian is to be sharing his faith as God gives the

opportunity. Pray each day that God will lead you to people who need to know Him and then provide you with sharing opportunities. When we pray, God will answer.

Final Thoughts

God has a divine design for the Christian life. It is a cross with vertical and horizontal components. Each facet of the design is important.

On the vertical axis:

- **Worship** keeps our relationship with God strong. When we worship we acknowledge Him as God and us as His servants.
- **Prayer** keeps us communicating with God and calling out to Him with praises and petitions. Fasting can be included in this, too. Go to www.chrislosey.com and click on "Short Books." Under "Short Books" click "Christian Life." Under "Christian Life" click "Fasting."
- **The Word** keeps us filling our hearts with His truth. It renews our minds, transforms our lives, and brings success.
- **The Holy Spirit** takes the Word that is planted in our hearts through study, and uses it to prompt us to do or not do things.

On the horizontal axis;

- **Fellowship** builds our relationships with other Christians as we share and pray with and for one another.
- **Giving** helps us fund God's church so the local assembly is strong and is able to all it needs to do in ministry.
- **Service** allows us to exercise our spiritual gifts as we serve one

another. It keeps Christ's body the church strong.

- **Outreach** allows us to reach a lost world with the love and gospel of Christ. This helps pass Christianity to the next generation.

God's design is perfect! Each person can evaluate his or her own life by laying God's design over it to see how he or she measures up. In order to make the various elements of God's divine design part of his life, a person may need to shift some priorities. For example he may need to cut back on other activities to give God first place. If he is an avid weight lifter he may need to spend a little less time in the gym in order to spend time with the Lord in study and prayer. If he is used to taking long bike rides on Sunday morning, he may need switch the rides to Saturday so he can be in church to worship with other believers on Sunday. If he spends various nights of the week in front of the TV he may need to give up a night in order to attend a fellowship group or Bible study where he can be encouraged by other Christians. If he has never learned to share his faith he might want to attend an outreach training event where he can learn more about evangelism. He may also need to rearrange his spending habits in order to give to God's work. In addition, he needs to make room in his life to serve in ministry.

In closing it needs to be said that every Christian must guard against a sterile "Life by the List" mentality. It is not enough to check off boxes and say, "Yes I prayed and studied today so I am living a good Christian life." Instead every believer should use the various facets of the divine design as a means to draw closer to God. As a person's life is brought into conformity with God's divine design, he will become a fruitful Christian making a positive impact for the Lord.

Some people may balk at the notion of bringing their lives into conformity with God's divine design, but they are the ones who will miss out if they don't. God's design is what's best for people and helps them stand strong for Him. It is what helps make their life count for eternity, and is what gives them real meaning and a great sense of satisfaction. In short, God's divine design not only benefits God's Kingdom, but also benefits each person who brings his life into conformity with it.

I pray that each of us will learn and live God's divine design so that we may be used mightily for His Kingdom and become true "world changers."

QUESTIONS AND REFLECTION

1. In space below, see if you can draw from memory the cross representing God's divine design. Also, label it with its various facets.

2. How are you doing in regard to the various facets of the divine design?

- Worship

- Prayer

- Time in God's Word

- Listening to the Holy Spirit

- Fellowship

- Giving

- Service

- Outreach

3. What do you need to reprioritize in order to bring your life in line with God's divine design? Write out a plan of action utilizing each facet of God's design.

- Worship

- Prayer

- The Word

- The Holy Spirit

- Fellowship

- Giving

- Outreach

- Service

4. Close in prayer asking God to help you bring your life into conformity with His divine design.

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