

## **Learning from Apostle Paul as Spiritual Guide and Its application to marketplace theology**

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For a working adult, taken out the sleeping time, majority of the time spent is in marketplace and with colleagues. Our working world becomes more vibrant and complicated. Economic and technology advancement accelerates the speed and dynamics. Issues, stress in work place are unprecedented. Kram found that individuals entering the adult world of work encountering issues relating self, career, and family” [\[1\]](#)

Christians need more support in work place, the life, spiritual growth and there is an increasing interest to look into spiritual guiding in pastoral care. Perhaps as St Augustine emphasizes that ‘no one can walk without a guide’. [\[2\]](#)

The paper will study the definitions, roles , characteristics of spiritual guides. Then will look into the learning from Apostle Paul as a successful spiritual guide with its implication to marketplace theology.

### 1.1 Defining the term, spiritual guide

There are many different names referring to someone with more experience mentoring, guiding, directing another. They are regarded as mentors, spiritual counsels, spiritual directors, soul-friends, discipler etc. [\[3\]](#)

A more formal title would be spiritual director but for those who wants to avoid the authority

involved will use the term spiritual friend or guide. Overall, they are positioned as trusted friends or God's usher who walks with the directees to find God's path. [4]

Interchangeably, the term spiritual mentor is used. The term mentor comes from the Greek mythology. [5]

When I look into the references, different terms are used as explained above. For consistency of discussion in the paper, I will use spiritual guide. I think the term best represent the goals and functions similar to a 'tour guide'. Who may plan the route, guide the route, point out the highlights. Moreover, a guide walks together with those he or she guides. Most importantly, is the meaning of guiding one to a destination – God. For those who are guided will be referred to as protégés in this paper.

## 1.2. Development and trends in spiritual guiding

There is an increasing emphasis on mentoring in the business, education and health care which renew the attention to spiritual guiding in Christianity. [6]

Historically, almost every society has had "elders" of some kind - tribal chieftains, village head-men, clan leaders or family patriarchs. Most every social unit across history and around the globe has clearly recognized adult role-models or Wisdom Figures. These are generally older, more experienced, stronger members of the group to whom the younger look for identity. [7]

In fact, the idea of personal guide in the inner life is not exclusively to Christianity but can also be found in Hindu, Yoga and in Buddhism. Leech pointed out the closer perhaps is guru in Hinduism. To the Hindus, the guru is not a teacher, not a master, not a leader but rather a light, an illumination, a divine manifestation. [8]

Leech explained in the Jewish tradition, the personal guide was considered less important as Yahweh was the guide and director (Psalm 73:24; Wisdom 7:15); His word was the lantern of the soul (Psalm 119:105). More importantly, prophets, priests and wise men were spiritual

guides. [\[9\]](#)

Anderson further pointed out although the word mentor is not in the bible, the concept is well weaved in New Testament in the ministry of Jesus and the apostles. He call out us to follow him and also go to lead people to Christ and help shape Christ-life- life styles. Instead of formal organized procedures, Jesus draw the followers close to him , to live and learn with him as they went through life through everyday challenges. [\[10\]](#)

In addition to Jesus, we can find much literatures on Paul as a mentor or spiritual director. (please refer to references). Paul also advocates ‘ let me mentor you, let me be your role model. (1 Cor 11:1; Phil 4:9) . [\[11\]](#)

How about the trend nowadays ? Anderson and Reese pointed out the trend of spiritual direction moved from historically a formal, top down, directive, official and private nature to the contrasting characteristics of informal, mutual, suggestive , unofficial (lay than clergy) to small group settings. [\[12\]](#)

We will now look at a few definitions of spiritual mentoring and direction (but is reference to spiritual guiding principles) [\[13\]](#) to understand what does it involve and what is the goal of spiritual guiding.

Moon & Benner pointed out spiritual direction is one important representation of soul caring which involves four key elements – healing, sustaining , reconciling and guiding. Soul caring incorporate the who person as it does not distinguish between the dimensions of persons, body, soul and spirit. [\[14\]](#)

Sellner referred spiritual mentoring as “transforming , helping someone else encounter his or her deeper self, which Jung calls ‘the larger and greater personality maturing within”. [\[15\]](#)

Leech used Max Thurian’s definition of spiritual direction as ‘spiritual direction or the cure of souls, is a seeking after the leading of the Holy Spirit in a given psychological and spiritual situation’. The focus is seeking. Both the director and directees are both seekers and involve in

a divine-human process of relationship.

The common theme identified from above is about seeking, transforming, growing to maturity of the soul through healing, development of the inner self which is led by the Holy Spirit - both the spiritual guide and protégés.

The goal of spiritual guiding is God centric – developing relationship not only horizontally but upward with God , finding the purpose and a spiritual transformation modeling after Christ’s life and character as explained in the following definitions.

As Copan defined “Spiritual direction is the (variegated) means by which one person intentionally influences another person or person in the development of his life as a Christian with the goal of developing his relationship to God and His purposes for that person in the world. [\[16\]](#)

Despite different traditions and emphasis, spiritual guiding shall be “the journey of transformation; each acknowledge is the true director is the Holy Spirit , each defines the goal of Christian spiritual formation as taking on more and more of the life and character of Christ”. [\[17\]](#)

### 1.3 .Different functions and roles of spiritual guiding

Leech pointed out the spiritual guiding is about the “growth of the solitary life in particular that the need for intensive personal guidance was felt ” [\[18\]](#) .

Spiritual guides provide various relational roles to the protégés. They act as coach, counselor, divine contact, discipler, doctor, exemplar (models for imitation), facilitator, intercessor, mediator, teacher, spiritual guide and sponsor. [\[19\]](#)

Both Moon & Benner and Leech suggested spiritual guide has a role of priest, a position of high authority, both stressed their role as confessor or soul physician. Leech pointed out the primary purpose of confession is forgiveness, not advice. [\[20\]](#) I think it is important to stress this role on its holiness and presenting both as a living sacrifice to God especially in marketplace theology.

The many roles can be grouped under the broad orientation of support (accompaniment and friendship), teaching (instructive, focused on classic devotion practices) or reconstructive (explicit focus on the process of transformation). They attend to different aspects of the person namely thinking, feeling, choosing, behaving and socializing. [\[21\]](#)

They are those giving examples, relationships, hands-on experience, support and empowerment for helping other's transformation. [\[22\]](#)

Anderson and Reese explained the spiritual guiding should not be seen as mechanical progression through stages, rather they shall be viewed as five guiding dynamics as first identified by Robert Clinton. These dynamics are attractions, relationship, responsiveness, accountability and empowerment. [\[23\]](#)

Among these dynamics, I like to elaborate on empowerment which is very critical and I have seen it frequently used. According to Anderson and Reese, empowerment is releasing the mentoree for continued growth through an empowered awareness of intimacy with God, identity as a child of God and unique voice for kingdom responsibility. [\[24\]](#) The ultimate aspect is the relationship the protégés builds with, within and upon God.

#### 1.4 Characteristics of spiritual guides

Spiritual guiding is grounded in relationship to God and a commitment to support, encourage and pray for one another. Spiritual guides give away their gift, time, treasure, teaching, power

and influence and shape others for the sake of the kingdom. [25] There are 3 areas of characteristics about their skills and qualities – their experience, the human interaction and the spiritual maturity.

The spiritual guides are experienced in life, who battled with the inner conflicts and realities life. They have perception, insight and of vision who can read the signs of the times. They are dedicated to helping another to recognize and follow the inspiration of grace in his or her life. They are a role model worthy of imitating. [26]

More importantly, one shall be a godly man. In fact, Leech advocated the first and essential characteristic of the spiritual guide is holiness of life, closeness to God. They immersed in Scripture and in the wisdom of the Father. They practice a life of spiritual disciplines, including prayer. They are gifted in spiritual discernment of God's already present action. Leech stressed the importance that spiritual guides shall be 'possessed by the Spirit', "giving way to the Holy Spirit which can move freely in the person and drawing him/ her to a closer union and a greater freedom as a child of God" [27]

The relational roles is critical, thus the spiritual directors have great interpersonal skills. They are attentive, reflective listeners, they recognize potential in people. They have the ability to foster an atmosphere of trust, acceptance and space. [28]

Lastly, other than focusing on the person, let us not forget Holy Spirit is the mentoring nuclear reactor of transformation. And one of the tools in his hand is the body of Christ. [29] Therefore, holy spirit and Jesus is the ultimate spiritual guide, human spiritual guide is a means (a guide) to the end.

## 2. Apostle Paul's characteristics as a Spiritual Guide

As highlighted above, the three areas of characteristics of spiritual guide are their experience, the human interaction and the spiritual maturity. Let us now turn to Paul and see his characteristics in these areas.

Following Jesus and Barnabas before him, Paul had an influential spiritual guiding relationship with Timothy, Silvanus, and Titus (2 Corinthians 1:1, 1 Thessalonians 1:1, and Galatians 3:1). [30]

## 2.1 Paul's personal experience and as a role model

Copan considered Paul as a good example of today's 'player-coach' ie the coach does not simply give instructions from the sidelines but remain on the same field, undergoing all the training and exercise that all the other players must do. The coach is more experienced in the game, knowing the game, the dangers and strategy. He is persuasive because of his actual experience (1 Cor 4:11, compare 2 Cor 4:7-12; 6:3-10; 11:1-12:10). [31] Other than the example cited above, Paul is a tent maker, he remains in the working field. I think someone with rich working experience will be an added asset as an effective spiritual guide in marketplace ministry

Copan pointed out while Jesus asked people to follow him, Paul called for people to 'imitate' him. Imitation is an important element of classical and Hellenistic moral instruction. "Examples served as demonstration of the appropriate manner of life" includes the thought, character, action and lifestyle of another. Paul incorporates different roles of imitation ie parent, teacher and leader. "Follow my example as I follow the example of Christ." (1 Cor. 11:1) "Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me — put it into practice." (Phil. 4:9) In other words, "let me mentor you. Let me be your role model." [32]

He reminds new Christians at Thessalonica to "follow our example." (1 Thes. 3:6) And Paul said, "we have made ourselves a model for you to follow." (v.9). Paul acts as an example, a model in developing fully devoted followers of Jesus and in transmitting the faith to his protégés. [33]

Paul explains to the elders at Ephesus, "You know how I lived the whole time I was with you" (Acts 20:17) and "In everything I did I showed you that by this kind of work we must help the weak." (v.35) In other words, Paul is telling the elders, "I showed you, now you show them." [34]

Paul has the experience but does not ask the protégés to follow him exclusively. He cited other examples to follow eg he mentions 'you imitated us' in 1 Thes 1:6 and the apostolic team in 1

The (2:1 -12). He approved other models, who are hallmarked by a similar orientation to Paul's own (Phil 3:17). [35]

Most importantly, the imitation Paul called for is not on himself or others such as Timothy. He stressed by sending Timothy to Corinthian church is that they can imitate through Timothy“ (1 Cor 4:17) who shall bring you into remembrance of my ways which be in Christ,” Christ is the ultimate one to imitate. He also points back to Christ as the spiritual parent . (1 Cor 4:17; 1 Cor 11:1; 1 Thess 1:6) . [36]

He is very cautious that the learning is not based on different human being, including himself. He is very clear whatever he does, it is only God that give the growth, he is only laboring with God and the foundation can only be grounded on Jesus Christ otherwise no man can lay. (1 Cor 3:4 – 11)

Another point worth noting is the imitation is referred to as “metaphorical”. This means there is an act of the imagination to draw parallels between Paul's text and their lives . ie to draw out understanding of the imitation described in the text and apply them appropriately to their own lives. [37] Copan cited Gaventa's description that “Paul does not praise the Thessalonians for wearing what Jesus wore or eating what Paul ate. He praised them for embodying in their own setting a response to the gospel that is consistent with Jesus' own faithfulness and with the faith of their teacher” [38]

It is a good point to note, in the spiritual guidance of marketplace, the guide would probably not working in the same company or even field. The sharing of experience, the imitation is about drawing the relevance and application to the setting.

## 2.2. Relational roles

Although a very important and influential apostle, Paul does not use authority and power. He frames the spiritual guidance in love, relationship , guidance and care as witnessed (Philippians 2:22; 1 Cor 4:1, 17, 1 Timothy 1:18. 2 Timothy 1:2-4). [39] . Paul is really passionate about his protégés. It is all grounded on love , as a shepherd and he loves them as his own life “ye are in our hearts to die and live with you.”( 2 Cor 7:3)

Paul does not identify himself as a teacher even though it is a major role. [40] . Paul does not use positional authority to influence his directees. His positional right would be considered as inadequate and inappropriate for his “pedagogical (instructional) intensions. The avoidance is witnessed in 1 The 2:7. Instead he pleads with them (1 Cor 4:16), stresses what he shares in common with them (Phil 3:17; 4:8-9), stresses his love for them (1 The 2:7-9) and appeals to his own example of how to live and think.

[41]

Paul demonstrates a solid bond with his protégés. [42] We can evaluate the way how he addresses his recipients, Paul mostly used term is brothers and sibling (sixty-seven times); followed by beloved (elven times) children (six times) and church (five times).

[43]

Brothers are frequently used by Paul to emphasize the mutuality that he shares with his recipients. Paul presents himself as a brother because they have a common father (v 3) , a commonality before God without distinction. “ [44]

While brotherhood stresses the horizontal relationship jointly before God, the ‘father’ metaphor highlighted the vertical role. But this does not mean an authoritative dimension, Paul uses the term to emphasize the caring concern, nurturing dimension of loving father, his concern for the development of his children, the sense of responsibility and duty to them. [45]

Paul reminds the church that he sets an example as a father (1 Thess 2:11). Kreider pointed out the similarities of spiritual and natural father as both demonstrate love: affirming the security of an unwavering commitment to the well-being; train and discipline: with a firm directing and guiding role to maturity and fruitfulness; provide: to sustain and enrich e.g. God’s blessing; reproduce: creating new life and rebirth (spiritual father); bless and impart : imparting spiritual blessings. [46]

In fact, a very good illustration why Paul uses the term Father can be seen in his letter to the Corinthian church which he points out the challenge “you may have ten thousand instructors in Christ , yet you do not have many fathers” (1 Cor 4:15). Knowledge of the gospel made them arrogant. [47] Therefore Paul with a compassionate heart wants them to help growing their spiritual maturity through his guidance as a father.

Another implication of Paul as spiritual parent is the metaphor of 'creating space' for the members of his community. The space refers to all dimensions – physical, emotional and temporal. This metaphorical use of space and its relationship to learning occurs in 2 Cor 6 and 7, where Paul is emphasizing emotional space. In 2 Cor 6:13, this emotional space is compared either to the door of one's heart or a cramped room "open wide your hearts also. "This openness of the Corinthian believers' hearts had become severely constricted. As a result, the space in this room for Paul, the gospel, and learning to live the gospel had virtually been squeezed out. Paul appeals to his children as one who had 'opened his heart wide to them' (2 Cor 6:11) – as one who had emotionally held nothing back from them and had created space in his life for them. He calls his directees to respond in kind "as a fair exchange – speaking to you as my children- open wide your hearts also (2 Cor 6:11, 2 Cor 7:2) [\[48\]](#)

In the same way, Copan urged the spiritual guides today should provide physical, emotional and temporal space for directees, in which the gospel can take root in their lives in which they can learn how to embody the gospel in their own life through observation of the pattern of the director's life. I agree with his proposition that emotional space is crucial for learning to take place. [\[49\]](#)

To conclude on the relational roles of being brothers and fathers, it is interesting to point out Paul changes the address to Timothy from son to brothers, especially as Timothy's ministry has advanced and his faith and commitment have been tested through the trials of prison. [\[50\]](#) I think this also points to the importance of recognizing the development and maturity of the protégés as their spiritual maturity grows.

Other than brothers and fathers, Paul uses the term servant and steward instead of leader to present himself in the 'polar-opposite' role to the pride-oriented Corinthians in 1 Cor. Paul saw himself as exclusively under the authority of Christ that governed his every thought and action. He is not motivated by self-serving values such as "pride, aggrandizement, power etc. which may lead to the abuse of his relationship with them" [\[51\]](#)

Lastly, the relationship Paul stresses is not only between human. He also reminds us the blessing is showered to God's children through our relationship with Christ (Eph 1:3) [\[52\]](#)

### 2.3. Paul's spiritual formation

It is critical as a spiritual guide, one should have a solid spiritual formation so that he or she can guide and be a role model for others. Spiritual formation is a process of those love and trust Jesus to take on the character of Christ guided by various spiritual practices . [\[53\]](#)

We will look into Paul's a transformation and his formation of character of Christ through the love of God, love of people and the practices guided him.

The spiritual growth of Paul is a miraculous grace. He was brought up as a Jew (Act 22:3) and prosecuted the Christians (Act 22:4-5). Then, he encountered the Lord on the road to Damascus (Act 22:6). He was converted and sent to preach to the gentiles (Act 22:21). To the Jew, Paul is a traitor: from seeing Jesus and the follower as heresy to preaching the gospel , affirming all these are conforming to the law and prophecy (Act 24:15). Thus he was persecuted by the Jews (Act 20:19). They wanted to kill him (Act 23:12). He was jailed (Act 24:27), beaten (2 Cor 11:24). His basic needs were not met (hunger, thirst, cold etc 2 Cor 11:27 ). However, he puts no value in his life for the sake of the gospel (Acts 20:24)

Through the salvation of Christ , he is a new creature (2 Cor 5:17). He crucified with Christ and he totally submitted to God and let God live in him(Gal 2:20). His total transformation can be witnessed from his will to give up all things but seeing only Christ as the rewards ( Phil 3:8)

Paul's spiritual formation is based on love , character of Christ– his deep-felt love and sacrifice of Christ, his response of loving God and other peoples – which turns to the zest of preaching the gospel , his only goal.

Paul experienced the love and mercy of God (Rom 8:35, 37). Paul totally transformed. He changed from believing in the law, the flesh (2 Cor 5:16), to be totally moved by the love of Christ (2 Cor 5:14). He affirms we cannot be justified by the law but saved by grace Gal 5:4. From then on, he is determined to only focus on Jesus and the cross. (1 Cor 2:2).According to God's sacrificing love, he too no longer just lives for himself but for others and Christ.( 2 Cor 5:15). Paul serves the Lord with all humility of mind (Act 20:19 ;2 Cor 11:7). He praises the Lord forever (2 Cor 11:31) .

Following God's character, Paul loves the others whole heartedly and spread the gospel for saving people's soul (Phil 1:8). The people Paul shepherds become his joy and crown (Phi 4:1) This love is based on the unity with Christ. (Phil 2:5) [54]. He loves other Christians whole heartedly, praying, remembering them day and night and even with weeping (Acts 20:31; 2 Tim 1:3). He does his best as a role model for others as he models Christ (1 Cor 11:1; Act 20:35). But he points out that does not mean he is perfect, his continues to seek the knowledge of Christ and be his servant. (Phil; 3:12)

The submission to Christ, the Holy Spirit and Paul's own commitment are practices that make him a matured Christians to guide others.

His sovereignty totally rests on Christ (Gal 2:20). He follows Christ (1 Cor 11:1). Not only this, his faith rests on the hope of the future coming of Christ again. Phil 3:20. Therefore he has a joyful heart even in challenging circumstances (Phil 4:4-5)

Paul submits and be guided by the Holy Spirit (2 Cor 5:5. 2 Tim 1:14) He stresses it is through the Spirit and faith, we will have hope (Gal 5:5) and the change from under to the Law to a new life is by the Spirit (Gal 5:18; Gal 5:25). He tells "If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit" and bears the fruit of the spirit. (Gal 5:22, 23)

His spiritual maturity is also due to his commitment but also he does not undermine the grace of the Lord: "Paul claimed he labored more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." (1 Cor 15:10). He is very devoted to fulfilling the vocation from God. Spiritual discipline leading to spiritual growth requires commitment, discipline and hard work.

### 3. Paul as an example of a spiritual guide in the marketplace ministry

To start off, a spiritual guide need to grounds his/ her value not on the world but on Christ and not only at work but around the whole life.

Paul's value is not grounded in the world although he is in the world. Paul centers his life and ministry on 'knowing Christ.( Phil 3: 7 -9; Phil 1:21). He holds the experiential, holistic

knowledge of and union with Christ to be the ultimate value and goal in life and rejects those elements considered by society as valuable. His personal glory, prestige, and honor are not considered values. Everything Paul does and thinks is controlled and informed by the way of knowing Christ. [55] It is important for Christians look at their work not through the lens of the world but that of Christ.

Paul invites others to scrutinize and imitate every aspect of his life ie the “totality”. 1 The 1:6, 1 Cor 4:16,17 and Phil 4:9. [56] It is not just about work but spiritual guidance is about every aspect of one’s life.

### 3.1 Fulfilling the vocational calling in work place theology

Sellner pointed out spiritual guiding [57] is concern with our vocation and relationship with God; the vocation or call that many are trying to clarify themselves today . This includes seeing our work as more than making a living ; work becomes a genuine opportunity for service , a way of contributing to other people’s lives. [58]

The word vocation roots from the Latin *vocare*, which means ‘to call’. “the sense of calling , or some people experience it , or being sent or led or even pulled or pushed is often associated with the transcendent, the Holy God’. Rather as Sellner advocated is “the deepest part of ourselves, our souls , are called..... It is a calling to become who we meant to be. It is a questions relating to our identity and meaning” [59]

It does not just equal to occupation, as Stevens pointed out, it is what Paul call “my purpose’. (2 Tim 3:10). [60]

Moon & Benner cited the story of the wise fish , a story illustrated by Carolyn Gratton, to explain the key role of spiritual guidance is cultivating the awareness of God’s transforming presence. While the fishes are anxiously swimming looking for the destination , the sea, they did not realize they are already at the sea. The spiritual guide , the wise fish pointed out ‘ you do not need to look further than where you already are’ [61]

This is a very good example, sometimes we search, we are busy but forget where we are and

the purpose of being there especially in our work. It reminds me of the famous quote by St Augustine 'our hearts are restless till they rest in thee, O Lord.' [62] Finding , confirming the purpose of one in its work role as well as how this role relate to the overall meaning set forth by the Lord is essential.

### 3.1.1. Paul with a clear vision of his own vocational calling as a role model

Paul intentionally uses the images of a servant and a steward to emphasize he is not working for selfish goals and desires but volitionally placing oneself in the service of God. His life is focused on preaching the message of the cross of Christ (1 Cor 4:16) and living in line with the implications of that cross seeking God's glory and intentionally focusing on 'heavenly' values and goals. [63] Because he receives and be obliged to his calling (Act 22:14) even though it is very contrary to what he has believed prior to conversion.

### 3.1.2 Paul as a spiritual guide to Timothy on vocation calling

Paul recognizes God give every one spiritual giftedness (1 Cor 7:17) and encouraged Timothy to use his effectively 2 Tim 1:6 . [64]

A lot of times, people may not be well aware or forget their gift, especially being discouraged at work. A key role of the spiritual guide is to help identify and encourage their protégés on this. Paul helps Timothy to build a sense of control, competence and goal internalization (empowerment). He helps Timothy to see the reinforcement that he was called by God to be a minister, serving as an example of what it means to be one of God's workers, and reminding Timothy of his ministerial goals especially when Timothy was in hardship. [65] . Re-engorging the vocation is important especially in challenging times as we will easily forget the 'purpose'.

Paul used five concepts to encourage Timothy. They include eternal reward, past promises, present promises, future promises, and the sovereign God. [66] That is a spiritual guide shall help identify how did their past calling led them to here, what are their current state, more importantly with a vision to see the future and the eternal rewards for fulfilling the purpose of God.

### 3.3. Paul as spiritual guide on ethics in marketplace theology

To discuss ethic in marketplace theology, I would like to point out Christians have a different view on economics which is the backdrop of work place. “When the market economy assumes people will act to maximize their own interests and seeing economic growth as unconditional good, Christians value the interest in the context of what is good for the neighbor and growth must be evaluated by its direct, indirect, short-term and long-term effects on the welling of all creation especially the poor.” [\[67\]](#)

Spiritual guides in marketplace ministry need to help build the awareness of differences in value between the secular and biblical world.

Paul discards the Corinthian society’s perceptive on what is considered wise, strong, and honorable in light of the ‘message of the cross; (1 Cor 1:18 -31) but instead Paul’s ethic is Christocentric oriented. [\[68\]](#)

He rises above the ‘world standard’. in 1 Cor 9. Even as a apostle who is entitled to be supported (to eat and drink v 4), Paul declines the support from Corinthian church so as to purely focus on the gospel and avoid the accusation of abuse use of power. (v18). Paul leads by example of not falling in trap of any excuse (as what people may call ‘grey area’) of putting his calling , preaching gospel , at any risk.

Other than his own role modeling, Paul teaches a rule to Timothy when faced challenge at his ministry (or marketplace) , “holding faith, and a good conscience” (1 Tim 1:19). The faith and conscience (guided by the Spirit) will be ethical swords in handling challenges in marketplace.

Lastly, Stevens proposed “the triad of marketplace virtues “as observed from Paul’s guidance. While everything in this world will eventually past, is work in vain and what will make our work last? Stevens cited Paul’s first letter to the Corinthians to illustrate three important points. Firstly, our works will be shown (trialed in the final days (1 Cor 3:12-15). [\[69\]](#) Pauls’ highlight of “faith, hope and love” in 1 Cor 13:13 is the ‘triad of marketplace virtues’. He further cited John Haughey’s observation that it is not the intention non the act alone on faith, hope and love but actions taken on these virtues.

[\[70\]](#)

. These three virtues are the foundation for work that will last. Finally he assured us Our labor in the Lord will not be in vain in 1 Cor 15:58.

[\[71\]](#)

### 3.4. Paul's teaching on spiritual growth in workplace theology

To start with, we need to define a few closely related terms : spiritual growth , spiritual formation and spiritual disciplines.

Spiritual growth is the process by which the Christian in all aspects of his or her life, moves from the beginnings of life in the Spirit to full maturity. [\[72\]](#) The growth involves the process of spiritual formation which is a process of those love and trust Jesus to take on the character of Christ guided by various spiritual practices.

[\[73\]](#)

Spiritual disciplines are defined as Christian practices that encourages spiritual growth and formation which is a life-long process that direct us to God and disciple us more fully into the likeness of Jesus Christ. It is not means of sanctification but rather ways to make us available to God in spiritual growth. Stevens proposed three general movements : the journey upward (to know and love God better), the journey inward (to know and love ourselves better) and the journey outward (to know and love others better). For upward journey, one can practice solitude, thanksgiving, confession, bible meditation. For inward journey, one is suggested to keep a journal, walking through life with Jesus. For journey outward , one shall pray for others-families and even enemies as well as to forgive.

[\[74\]](#)

One of the key elements of spiritual guidance in helping the protégés to grow in spiritual maturity, surrendering to the will of God and his love. [\[75\]](#) Kreider suggested the spiritual guiding is spending time studying the bible together , answering questions and praying together..... laying the foundation for a fruitful life of following Jesus.

[\[76\]](#)

Many emphasized the importance of praying together or for the protégés

[\[77\]](#)

. Leech highlighted the aspects of discipleship and the struggle for holiness of spiritual guiding

[\[78\]](#)

It is this point of ‘struggle for holiness’ that I would like to single out for the relevancy on marketplace theology. What we have discussed so far : spiritual growth , spiritual formation and spiritual disciplines are important for every Christian either they are working or not. However, as Kwok has pointed out the central point of biblical teaching of vocation in work is “separation” from the secular world. The separation is not about ‘leaving the marketplace but call for one to be holy’ . As Paul instructs us “cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God” 2 Cor 6:17 – 7:1 [\[79\]](#)

Therefore what we will now study, Paul’s teaching on spiritual growth is not specific to marketplace theology. However, it is an important aspect in the marketplace where Christians need to “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour” 1 Pet 5:8

#### 3.4.1. Paul’s teaching on spiritual growth

Paul encourages Christians shall no longer be infants but shall grow up into ..... Christ. ( Eph 4:14). Spiritual growth is primarily the achievement of God “we are God’s workmanship” Eph 2:10’ , it is not human effort (Gal 3:3). Paul earnestly prays for the Thessalonians for God’s sanctification, whole spirit, soul and body be preserved blamelessly. 1 The 5:23- 24. [\[80\]](#)

However, Paul also highlights God seek our cooperation as fellow workers (1 Cor 3:9), we need to do our part. Stevens quoted Paul’s teaching guides us on how to achieve spiritual growth – crucifying the flesh (Gal 5:16-18), walking with the Spirit (Gal 5:25; 6:7-8), turning troubles into sacraments (Rom 5:2-5) [\[81\]](#)

#### 3.4.2. Paul’s teaching on spiritual formation

Peace cited Paul's three teaching on spiritual formation and also suggested they are all centric on transformed or formed, ie undergo a deep-seated, all-encompassing change of character and conduct. [\[82\]](#)

By looking into Romans 12:2, Peace explained Paul's illustration of stages of Christian moral transformation from the world standard into the image of Christ. "First our mind be renewed by the Word and Spirit of God; then we are able to discern and desire the will of God and then we are increasingly transformed by it" [\[83\]](#)

In 2 Cor 3:18, Peace highlighted Paul reveals the goal of spiritual formation is that we be made into the image of the Lord even though dimly see, we are changed by beholding the divine. This similar theme is also noted in Gal 4:19 where Paul repeats 'we are to be reshaped, molded, altered, changed from one form to another, until we reflect the image of Christ. Finally Peace wrapped up Paul reminds us that we are in Christ and that Christ is in us (Rom 8:10; 1 Cor 1:30; 2 Cor 5:17; Col 1:27). The essence of this point is spiritual formation is a realization in everyday life. [\[84\]](#)

### 3.4.3. Paul's teaching on spiritual disciplines

While we have discussed some examples of spiritual disciplines, Christian practices, in this section, we are not going into individual practices but I propose to look into prayers and bible reading. As mentioned above, prayer is important and frequently highlighted. In 2 Tim 1:3. Paul said "I thank God, whom I serve from my forefathers with pure conscience, that without ceasing I have remembrance of thee in my prayers night and day", we can see Paul, as a spiritual guide pray for his protégés constantly, day and night and also passionately without ceasing.

Secondly, is the importance of studying the scripture. Although Paul recognizes Timothy read the bible since he was young and led him to salvation. But what to follow is sanctification and glorification. The scripture continues to play an important role in assisting us, therefore Paul stressed the scripture is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness. That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. (2 Tim 3:17, 18)

Finally, there is also one theme I would like to highlight . In 1 Cor 9:27 Paul stresses bringing the body under control “But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection” Copan proposed the active discipline is similar to the athlete who goes into rigorous conditioning in order to win the race. Copan, Saint Paul as spiritual director, 226. I think it is a good analogy : it involves consistent, persistent practice, hard work, commitment, focus so as our Christian discipline life.

#### 4. Conclusion

The study of the topic helped me better understand spiritual guiding is not only a relationship between two human beings. The direction shall be towards an inner spiritual growth and towards God, modeled after Christ and guided by Holy Spirit. Paul as a spiritual guide is an excellent role model because of he is modeling after Christ. His theology is very Christ and cross centric. As Moon and Benner suggested, the ultimate spiritual guide is Jesus. Therefore, we can see Paul always brings the protégés to Jesus , not himself. [\[85\]](#)

Paul has demonstrated the important qualities of spiritual guides in building very deep relational roles and always guide his protégés back to Christ. This is grounded by his experience of God’s love and he radiates it out.

Paul offers valuable teachings on the three key areas specific to marketplace theology – fulfilling the vocation despite hardship, a set of ethic different from the world so one can be ‘separate’ and teaching on the spiritual growth into Christ ( Eph 4:14). They are valuable especially among the dynamic, complicated working world today.

Lastly, Paul himself is a great model of how he receives spiritual guidance from Jesus and Barnabas then move on to help others. As Anderson pointed out if a Christian leader is not mentoring someone, to that degree he or she is not living up to his or her calling. [\[86\]](#) While receiving guidance, we shall also think of how to better support others and we all grow together in Christ to His likelihood, especially in the marketplace where we can be the salt and light and when the devil is like a roaring lion !

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[2] Kenneth. Leech, *Soul friend : spiritual direction in the modern world.* (London : Darton, Longman & Todd, c1994, c1977),37

[3] Keith R Anderson & Randy D, Reese. *Spiritual mentoring : a guide for seeking and giving direction* . (Downers Grove, IL : InterVarsity Press, c1999),35 & Larr, Kreider. *Authentic spiritual mentoring : nurturing younger believers toward spiritual maturity.*( Ventura, Calif. : Regal Books, 2008), 129, 130

[4] W Moon and David G Benner, *Spiritual direction and the care of souls : a guide to Christian approaches and practices.* (Downers Grove, Ill. : InterVarsity Press, c2004),20

[5] Ulysses placed his son Telemachus under the wise man, Mentor who did not only merely provide information but an education of soul and spirit and mind to the young son. Anderson & Reese, *Spiritual mentoring : a guide for seeking and giving direction,* 35

[6] Ibid34.

[7] Lynn Anderson,□ *Is Spiritual Mentoring a Biblical Idea?*

[8] Leech, *Soul friend,* 35

[9] Ibid, 36

[10] Lynn Anderson,□ *Is Spiritual Mentoring a Biblical Idea?*; Rivera. *"Mentoring Stages in the Relationship between Barnabas and Paul"*: 2-3

[11] Lynn Anderson, *Is Spiritual Mentoring a Biblical Idea?*

[12] Anderson & Reese , *Spiritual mentoring : a guide for seeking and giving direction*, 35

[13] As used by the author in the original text

[14] Moon and Benner, *Spiritual direction and the care of souls*, 11 , 219

[15] Edward C, Sellner, *Mentoring : the ministry of spiritual kinship*. (Notre Dame, Ind. : Ave Maria Press, c1990),10

[16] Victor A , Copan. *Saint Paul as spiritual director : an analysis of the imitation of Paul with implications and applications to the practice of spiritual direction* . (Milton Keynes, U.K. ; Colorado Springs, Colo. : Paternoster, 2007), 39

[17] Moon and Benner. *Spiritual direction and the care of souls*, 27

[18] Leech used spiritual direction in the original text . Leech, *Soul friend*, 84

[19] Anderson & Reese *Spiritual mentoring*, 37; Sellner, *Mentoring*, 25; Copan, *Saint Paul as spiritual director* , 231-2; Moon and Benner . *Spiritual direction and the care of souls* , 21, 27

[20] Leech, *Soul friend*, 36, 204, 206, 210. Moon and Benner. *Spiritual direction and the*

*care of souls* , 20.

[21] Moon and Benner. *Spiritual direction and the care of souls*, 21, 27

[22] Adele Ahlberg, Calhoun, *Spiritual disciplines handbook : practices that transform us* (Downers Grove, Ill. : InterVarsity Press, c2005),142

[23] the five dynamic rather than stages between mentors and mentees attractions : initiating and establishing the mentoring relationship which includes the phrase of attraction. Relationship : nurturing a hospitable relationship of trust and intimacy Responsiveness: sustaining the dynamic of teachability through development of responsiveness in the mentoree Accountability: refining growth in the mentoree through specific disciplines of accountability Empowerment: releasing the mentoree for continued growth through an empowered awareness of intimacy with God, identity as a child of God and unique voice for kingdom responsibility. Anderson & Reese 59

[24] Ibid

[25] Calhoun, *Spiritual disciplines handbook* 142, 151

[26] Leech, *Soul friend*, 84-85

[27] Anderson & Reese, *Spiritual mentoring*, 58,59; Leech, *Soul friend*, 36, 84-85, 204, 206, 210; Moon and Benner.

*Spiritual direction and the care of souls*  
, 20, 21.

[28] Anderson & Reese, *Spiritual mentoring*, 59

[29] Calhoun,□□ *Spiritual disciplines handbook* 142 .

[30] Rivera. “*Mentoring Stages in the Relationship between Barnabas and Paul*”: 7

[31] Copan, *Saint Paul as spiritual director*, 245

[32] Ibid, 40, 41, 53, 220

[33] Lynn Anderson, *Is Spiritual Mentoring a Biblical Idea?*

[34] Ibid

[35] Copan, *Saint Paul as spiritual director*, 253

[36] Ibid, 231

[37] Ibid, 227

[38] Ibid, 232

[39] Stacy E. Hoel, “Then mentor relationship : an exploration of Paul as loving mentor to Timothy and the application of relationship to contemporary leadership challenges.” *Journal of Biblical Perspectives in Leadership* 3, no. 2 (Summer 2011), 40

[40] Copan, *Saint Paul as spiritual director*, 60

[41] Ibid, 254

[42] Hoehl 'Then mentor relationship', 41

[43] Ibid, 59

[44] Copan, *Saint Paul as spiritual director*, 221 Hoehl, *Then mentor relationship*, 40

[45] Copan, *Saint Paul as spiritual director*, 221, 246- 247

[46] Kreider. *Authentic spiritual mentoring*, 35- 36

[47] Ibid, 16

[48] Copan, *Saint Paul as spiritual director*, 247.

[49] Ibid

[50] Hoehl, *Then mentor relationship*. 40

[51] Copan, *Saint Paul as spiritual director*, 22, 246

[52] Kreider. *Authentic spiritual mentoring*, 36

[53] Robert Banks and R Paul Stevens, □ *The Complete Book of Everyday Christianity: an A-to-Z Guide to Following Christ in Every Aspect of Life*. (Downers Grove, Ill. : InterVarsity Press, c1997),939

[54] (Phil 2:5) Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.

[55] Copan, *Saint Paul as spiritual director*, 223

[56] Ibid, 223-4

[57] Sellner 's original text is spiritual mentoring

[58] Sellner, *Mentoring*, 18, 25

[59] Ibid, 83

[60] R. Paul , Stevens. □ *The Other six days : vocation, work, and ministry in biblical perspective* . (Grand Rapids, Mich. : Vancouver, B.C. : W.B. Eerdmans ; Regent College Pub., 2000. emic, c2008) 72

[61] Moon and Benner. *Spiritual direction and the care of souls*, 12

[62] Sellner, Mentoring, 83

[63] Copan, *Saint Paul as spiritual director*, 225, 226

[64] Mike, Hooper. *Why bother spending time and energy coaching*. May 21, 2011.

[65] Hoehl, *Then mentor relationship* , 37

[66] Moon and Benner. *Spiritual direction and the care of souls*, 21

[67] EICA (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America) stated some significant differences between the current world and Christians views on economics. Autonomy and self-sufficiency are highly valued in society, Christians depend on God's grace through faith and we are interdependent to one another. Market economy emphasizes what we want and the willingness and ability to buy while Christians see the difference of we want is not necessarily what we need. While basic economic assumption is resources are scare relative to unlimited human wants, Christians look upon God the creator to provide abundance, if only we learn how to use and share. When the market economy assumes people will act to maximize their own interests and seeing economic growth as unconditional good, Christians value the interest in the context of what is good for the neighbor and growth must be evaluated by its direct, indirect, short-term and long-term effects on the welling of all creation especially the poor. (A social statement on sufficient, sustainable an livelihood for all " by ELCA  
<http://www.elca.org/What-We-Believe/Social-Issues/Social-Statements/Economic-Life.aspx>)

[68] Copan, *Saint Paul as spiritual director*, 225

[69] #Stevens 157

[70] R Paul Stevens, *Work matters : lessons from Scripture*. Grand Rapids, Mich. : W.B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 2012, 157

[71] Ibid 158

[72] Banks and Stevens. *The Complete Book of Everyday Christianity*, 949

[73] Ibid ,939

[74] Ibid, 932- 938

[75] Moon and Benner. *Spiritual direction and the care of souls*, 12, 20.

[76] Kreider. *Authentic spiritual mentoring*, 129

[77] Ibid; Leech, *Soul friend*, xviii; Calhoun, *Spiritual disciplines handbook* 151

[78] Leech, *Soul friend*, xviii

[79] *Spiritual disciplines handbook*: (Leech : *Soul friend*, 2011), 284

[80] Banks and Stevens. *The Complete Book of Everyday Christianity*, 949 - 953

[81] Ibid

[82] Ibid,939 - 940

[83] Ibid, 939

[84] Ibid, 938 - 942

[85] “slow down, be at peace , listen to my words, and you will become aware the spring of living water. (Mt 6:25 – 34; Jn 4:14; 10:10; 14:27)” Moon & Benner, *Spiritual direction and the care of souls* , 14

[86] Lynn Anderson, *Is Spiritual Mentoring a Biblical Idea?*