

A Service Exploring the
Triangle Lifeshape



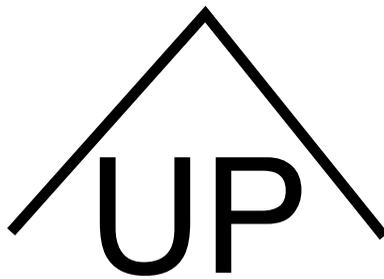
The Triangle Lifeshape helps us remember, understand and grow in the three dimensions of life.

During this service you will have an opportunity to explore these dimensions by moving around three different stations that we have set up in various areas of the church building.

Each of these stations are designed to include all ages and so for those of you with families we encourage you to participate with your children.

At each of the stations you will have an opportunity to add things to this booklet. You and your family will then have a resource that you can take home and refer to as you go on the journey of living a balanced three dimensional life.

We won't succeed at living a balanced three dimensional life at the first attempt - it will take practice, just like a child learning to walk. But it is the way that Jesus lived and it is our privilege and opportunity to follow his example.



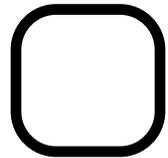
The example of Jesus: Luke 6:12

The “UP” dimension of life is our Relationship with

What are some of the elements of this relationship?

How would you rate this dimension
of your (and your family’s) life at the
moment?

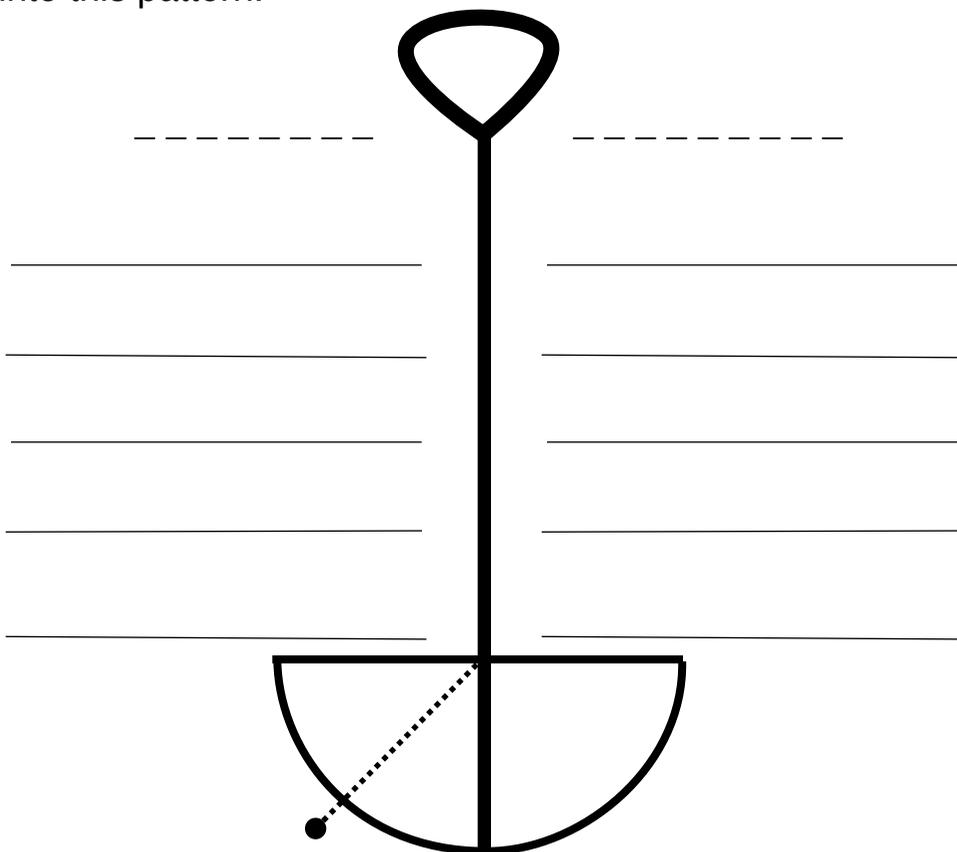
1 (weak) to 10 (strong)
you aren’t allowed to choose 5

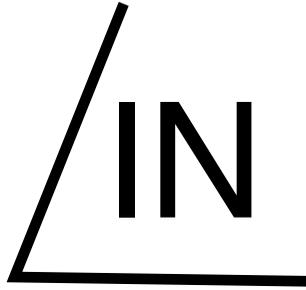


The vitality of this relationship can be undermined by the E_____ and E_____ we all experience in life.

While it is good to be refreshed by getting spiritual buckets filled at church, we need to discover springs of God's abundance just beneath the surface of our daily lives by learning to E_____.

The Semicircle Lifeshape reminds us of the rhythm of life between rest and work, abiding in Jesus and bearing fruit. The various Spiritual Disciplines that help us excavate fall into this pattern.





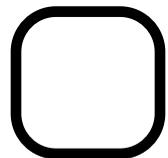
The example of Jesus: Luke 6:13-16

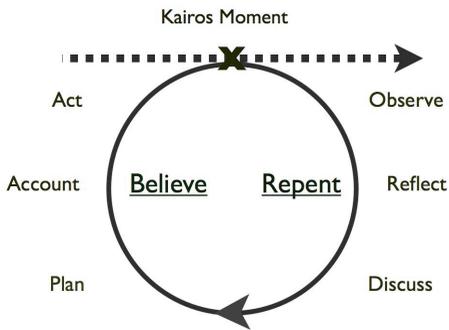
The “IN” dimension of life is our Relationship with

What are some specific times when you have experienced this dimension of life in a fantastic way?

How would you rate this dimension of your (and your family's) life at the moment?

1 (weak) to 10 (strong)
you aren't allowed to choose 5





We can use the learning circle to strengthen this dimension of life.

Discuss what simple plans can we make to experience it again?

Read 1 Cor 11:23-26, and 1 Cor 12:12-27 while sharing communion together.

What Strikes You?

For more detailed reflection and discussion later:

When was it good?

What made it good?

How did it come about?

What can stop us experiencing it?

What will we do to experience it again?

Who will we ask to keep us accountable?

When will we do it?

OUT

The example of Jesus: Luke 6:17-19

The “OUT” dimension of life is our Relationship with

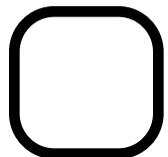
The relationship includes both _____ and _____!

It involves our _____, _____, and _____,
but to be effective we need the empowering of the

What should be our motive in this dimension (2 Cor 5:14)?

How would you rate this dimension
of your (and your family’s) life at the
moment?

1 (weak) to 10 (strong)
you aren’t allowed to choose 5

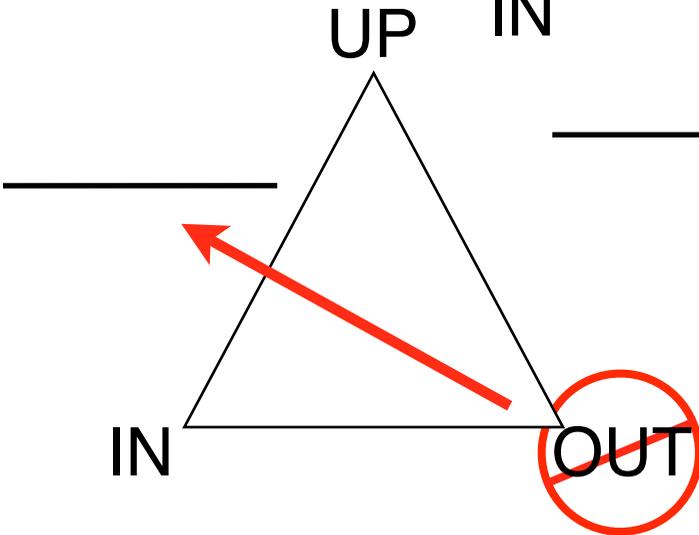
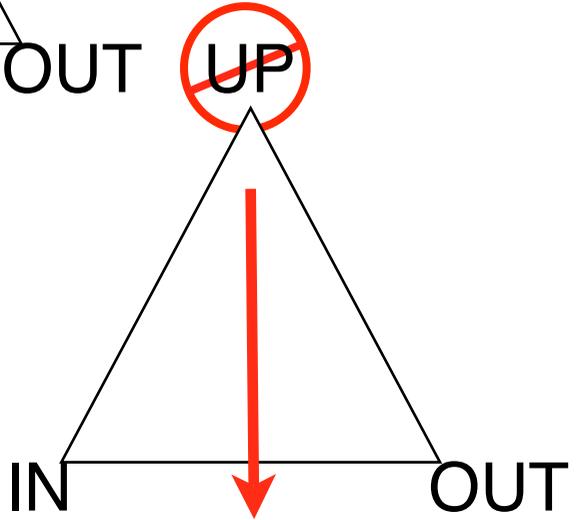
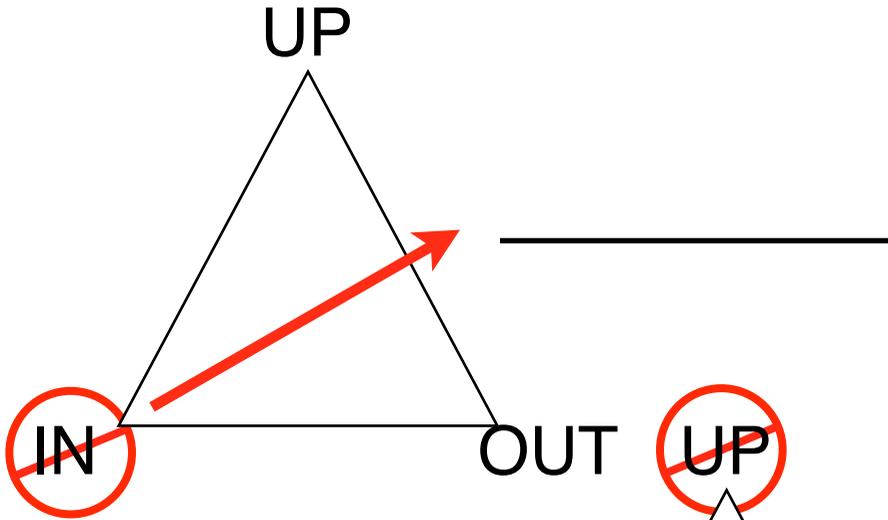


People are in different circumstances of life and will begin to connect to the good news of Jesus in different ways. Draw lines to match the verses describing aspects of the good news with the life situations:

God seems remote from my life	Rom 8:35-39
I am an overachiever determined to reach the top of the ladder at any cost	1 Peter 5:6-7
My life is so messed up I feel like I am beyond help	Ps 51 and Ps 103:12
I am crushed by sense of guilt	2 Cor 5:17
I am overwhelmed by anxiety	Rom 3:23-24
I am afraid of death	2 Cor 5:15

You will be given an envelope. Please prayerfully use its contents to bless someone in need this week. The person should be from outside our church. We would like to hear about your experiences in this process so please send an email

What can happen if we are missing a dimension of Life?



Excerpt from 'Balancing the Relationships of Life' by Mike Breen

When it comes to Up, In, and Out, how balanced are you? Are you even touching all three?

Perhaps your weakness is the Up dimension. Your relationship with God is always hard work. You care about what is going on in the world around you. You try to be a good citizen with good values. But when you are on your own with God, everything dries up. Your commitment becomes little more than duty. You have tried so many times to improve your prayer life, but you end up falling asleep. And though you're embarrassed to admit it, has been *months* since you read the Bible. You're not even sure where your Bible is. On the rare occasion that a moment of guilt makes you pick up your Bible, you tend to read a familiar passage, and you don't get anything out of it. You've tried to get better at Bible study, but the truth is, *you are bored.*

Or you could be one of those people who enjoys your relationship with God. You see prayers answered, and you've got great devotionals that open the Bible up to you. When it comes to the world around you, you love giving to missions that make a difference in the world. You're conscious of issues going on in the world, the needs of the poor and deprived in your community. It's just the church that you don't like, for any number of reasons. In the past, people were too judgmental. Or the church never made an effort to make you feel welcome. You were misunderstood or even hurt by things other Christians have done to you. Now it all just feels fake:

false smiles and shallow relationships. In the end you just stopped going regularly. Your In dimension is almost non-existent.

Maybe your difficulty is with the Out dimension. You are consistent when it comes to your devotions, and you're involved in your local church. In fact, outside of work you spend most of your time at church. You are immersed in all things Christian. Christian music, books, TV, even films. Your children attend a private Christian school. You want to have the right influences in your life, which is great. Yet because your life is only Up and In, you are unable to be a positive influence in the world because you so seldom connect with it in everyday life. Out rarely happens for you.

Sometimes our changing circumstances can disrupt the balance of our lives. Your Up life was great until you had a newborn child. Then it disappeared under a pile of diapers and sleepless nights. Your In was fine until you moved to a new state with your new job. It's been hard work trying to settle the family into a church. There was a time when Out was your strength, but you are in a new and unfamiliar neighborhood. You don't know where to begin when it comes to serving your community.

So where are you today? Up, In, or Out? Where are you strongest? Weakest? Which of the three dimensions is the most natural to you? Which one requires a lot of effort? Many of us find that we can sustain one or two dimensions at a time, but not all three.

Without three dimensions, we cannot live a balanced life. But the truth is that none of us can do it automatically. None of us does it easily. It's humbling for all of us that doing three simple things is so difficult!

That's why we need Jesus to help us. It is his grace alone that enables us to live the kind of balanced life that he has called us to live.

That's why we also need other people around us to encourage and support us. Friends and small groups can spur us on in our pursuit of a balanced life.

That's why we need to keep our hearts open to the possibility that God has called us to bring justice, transformation, hope, and especially salvation to those around us.

Though we may be more naturally skilled or comfortable with one dimension than another, it doesn't matter which dimension we neglect. Missing one always makes an impact. We may be doing two of the three dimensions really well, but this won't defeat the enemy. Our enemy might be knocked down for a while, but he'll get up laughing. If we aren't living the way Jesus lived, we can't sustain ourselves in battle. If we don't have control of all three dimensions in our lives, the enemy won't even need to give up any ground. It won't be long before we'll grow weary. We can gain incredible spiritual power from the fellowship and community that different types of relationships afford. If you're not walking in all three dimensions, it's time for some adjustments to your attitude and your heart so that you can move in a new direction with your relationships.

Review the booklet:

What is your strongest dimension? _____

Spend time thanking God

Which is your weakest dimension? _____

What one thing will you do this week to begin to strengthen it?

Who (friend or family member) will you ask to keep you accountable to your plan?
