

SESSION 4

ALL IN REQUIRES

transformation

"For it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill His good purpose." Philippians 2:13

ABOUT THIS SESSION

It's ALL IN time. This will be our last session together before we make our ALL IN commitment when we gather this Sunday. We will meet next week to celebrate and continue to grow, but what happens between now and then will mark a significant change in many people's lives. We trust this small group will be able to look back on these days as a time when God worked in unexpected ways to bring about far more than we asked or thought.

For many of us, the ALL IN Initiative has been a defining moment in which God worked on the process of transformation in our lives. As we will see in this session, God never stops working on us. Even someone who was ALL IN, like the Apostle Paul was, could write, "For I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep what I have committed to Him until that day" (2 Timothy 1:12).

We are trusting this has been and will continue to be a time of remarkable spiritual growth for the entire Oaks family. We're ALL IN this together, and God is going to do a great thing in us and through us.



COME

together

Small Group Host Note: Open your group with prayer. This should be a brief, simple prayer, in which you invite God to be with you as you meet. You can pray for specific requests at the end of the meeting, or stop momentarily to pray if a particular situation comes up during your discussion.

Then, begin your time together by using the following questions and activities to get people talking.

QUESTIONS

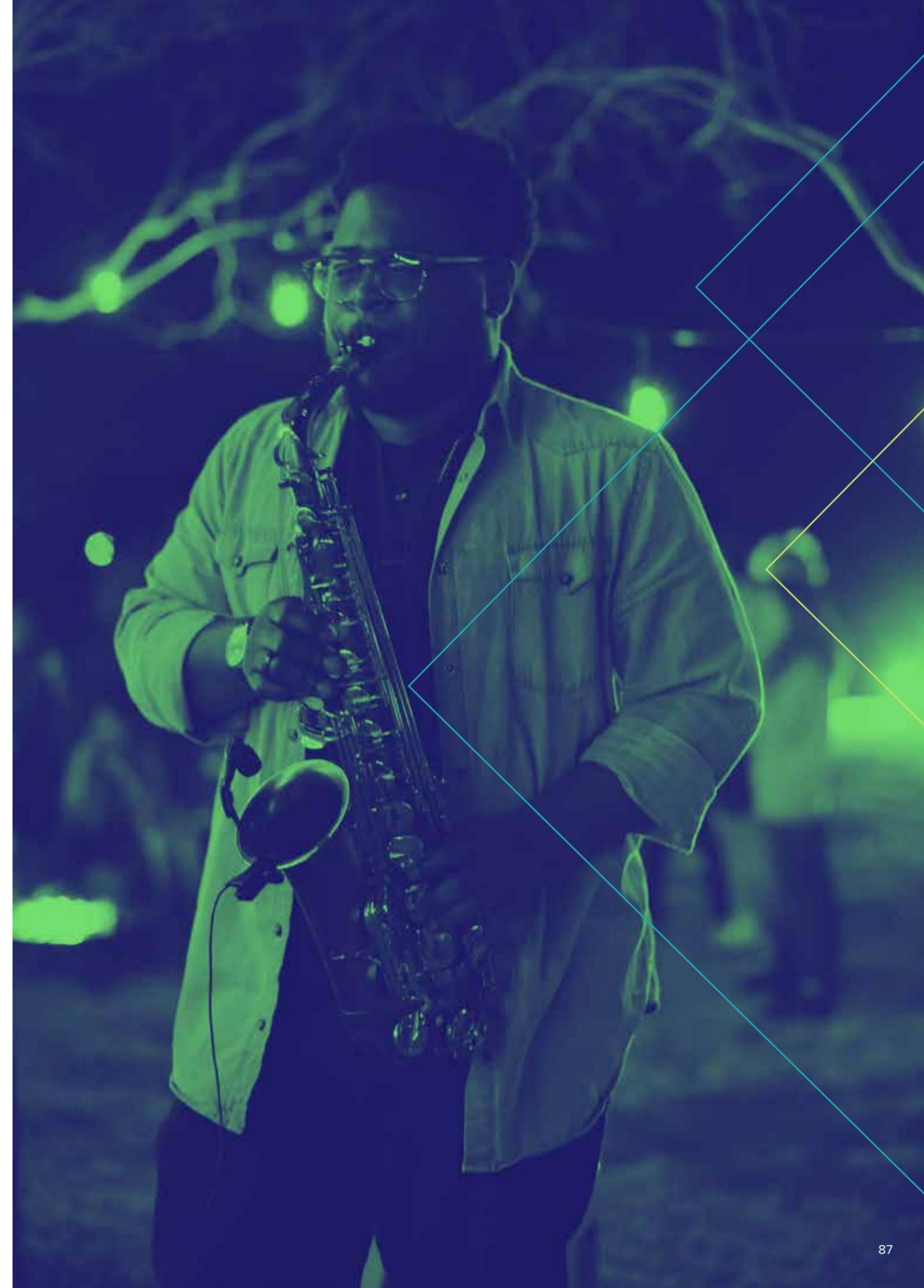
- 1 What has stood out to you the most over the past four weeks since we've been doing the ALL IN series?
- 2 Since we're going to talk a lot about transformation in this session, let's talk about what we mean when we use the word "transformed." What are the differences between an appearance or surface transformation (getting made up to play a part) and core transformation (what happens to a caterpillar on the way to becoming a butterfly)? Why would one be more desirable (or more difficult) than the other?

Before watching the video, go to names.theoaksonline.org. Type in your name to find out the spiritual meaning of your name.

WATCH THE VIDEO



You can watch the video online at allin.theoaksonline.org or on the ALL IN DVD. This fourth session video will setup our discussion and will lead us towards our commitment in the ALL IN Initiative. In the video, Pastor Scott is teaching on transformation and interacting with others from The Oaks about the way God wants to transform us. Use the space to record any key thoughts, questions, and things you want to remember or follow up on. After watching the video, have someone read the Scripture passage and questions in the Learn Together section and direct the discussion among the group. As you go through each of the subsequent sections, ask someone else to read the questions and direct the discussion.



LEARN TOGETHER



QUESTIONS

- 1 Why did God change Abram's name? Does acceptance of a name like "Christian" or "Christ-follower" make a difference in a person's life?
- 2 Using Abraham as an example, how would you describe God's transformation plan?
- 3 What was the most memorable thing Pastor Scott or one of the participants in the circle said during the video about change?
- 4 What are some areas of life that God would want to transform in each of us?

God uses stories to guide us. In fact, the Bible is His story! When we read the true stories of Scripture, we learn what God is like and we see His plan unfolding. We also learn principles for our own lives. So how can we become a part of God's story? By aligning our stories with His and not just understanding what it means to follow Him, but actually doing it—changing our attitudes and actions to live as He would live.

Use the following questions to guide your discussion of the teaching and stories you just experienced, and the Bible passage below. You may also want to refer to the study notes on the next page to guide your reading and discussion.

SCRIPTURE

READ: GENESIS 17:1-8

When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to him and said, "I am God Almighty; walk before me faithfully and be blameless. **2** Then I will make my covenant between me and you and will greatly increase your numbers." **3** Abram fell facedown, and God said to him, **4** "As for me, this is my covenant with you: You will be the father of many nations. **5** No longer will you be called Abram; your name will be Abraham, for I have made you a father of many nations. **6** I will make you very fruitful; I will make nations of you, and kings will come from you. **7** I will establish my covenant as an everlasting covenant between me and you and your descendants after you for the generations to come, to be your God and the God of your descendants after you. **8** The whole land of Canaan, where you now reside as a foreigner, I will give as an everlasting possession to you and your descendants after you; and I will be their God."

STUDY NOTES

I am Almighty God; walk before Me and be blameless (v.1). Cause, action, result—God was pointing Abram to a transformed way of living. The order is significant. We often try to reverse it: once I'm blameless, maybe I can walk before Almighty God. Our approach is impossible; but God's approach is possible because He makes it so.

No longer shall your name be called Abram (v.5). In Abram's case, God takes some beginning-of-life-stuff (like getting a name and the act of circumcision) and makes it much later-in-life-stuff. God changed his name from Abram (exalted father) to Abraham (father of a multitude) and established a practice for each generation of sons of the Covenant before the first of those sons was born.

As you read this passage about Abraham, notice how God's move in his life affected everything—name, property, offspring, and possessions. God was declaring His right to all of it.

GROW TOGETHER



The idea of transformation (change under God’s hands) sometimes seems rather intimidating – as if God needs to radically change who we currently are in order for us to be more like Him. The truth is that our experiences of transformation often come through multiple small transformations within us. The instant “radical” transformation is still possible, but does not happen as frequently as transformation by process. Since God designed you originally, it’s His plan to complete your “formation” into the likeness of His Son.

- 1 Share a significant past experience where God shaped you more into the image of Jesus.
- 2 What is a next step in your transformation process? What is God asking you to do to make you more like Jesus?

PRAY TOGETHER

To close your time together, spend some time praying.

- 1 Ask everyone to share, “How can we pray for you this week?” Be sure to write prayer requests on our Prayer and Praise Report on page 120.
- 2 Close your meeting with prayer.

DAILY devotionals

There are six days of devotions. On the last day, read back over your responses and let that guide a final time of reflection.

Use these daily devotions to go deeper into this week's topic. Each day, read the verse given. Take your time. Ask God to speak to you through His Word. Notice which word or phrase stands out to you. Then take some time to journal your response back to Him. You can write whatever is on your heart. Answer the "Reflect" question only if it's helpful. Feel free to go another direction if you sense God leading you. On the first day, you may want to read over all the verses for the week to get the "big picture" of the passage. But then walk slowly, verse by verse. Listen to what God wants to say to you through His Word, and respond to Him as you meditate on the truths of Scripture.

After Day 3 of each week, you will have an opportunity to take what you have learned and put it into practice. These "Action Steps" will challenge you to respond to these truths in your daily life.

MEMORY VERSE

For it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill His good purpose.

Philippians 2:13

DAY 1

Read 2 Timothy 1:12

"That is why I am suffering as I am. Yet this is no cause for shame, because I know whom I have believed, and am convinced that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him until that day."

REFLECT

How is God going to be involved in the making and the keeping of your commitment next Sunday?

DAY 2

Read 2 Corinthians 5:17

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!"

REFLECT

How does this verse describe the work of transformation Christ is currently carrying out in your life?
