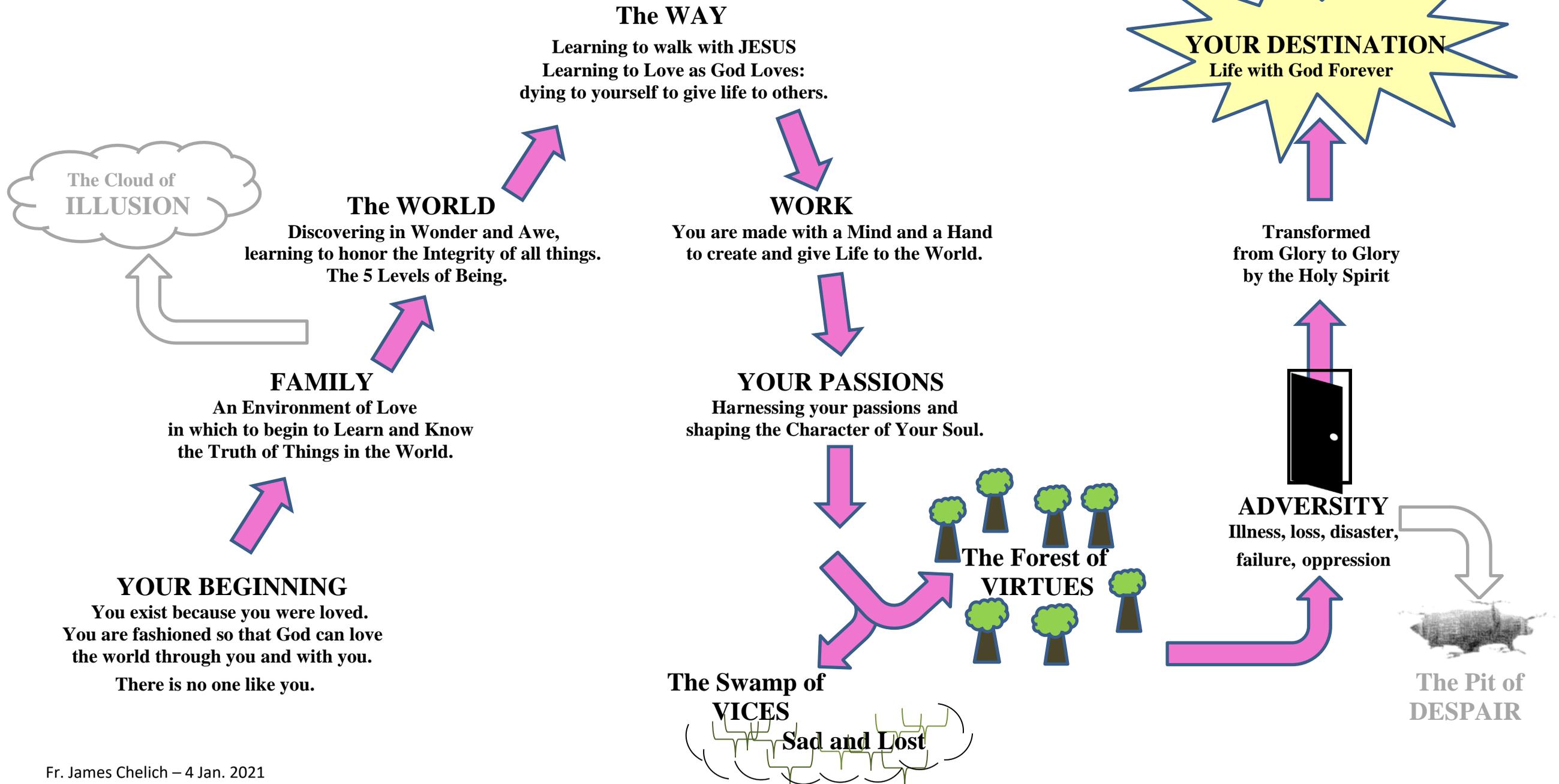


# THE MAP OF LIFE



## YOUR BEGINNING

*Before I formed you in the womb I knew you,  
before you were born I dedicated you,  
a prophet to the nations I appointed you. Jeremiah 1:5*

“Why I exist” is one of the fundamental questions a person must, at some time or another, confront. Those who do not come to realize that they exist because they are wanted and loved, struggle to find a solid foundation for their life. They are *desperate* to find someone who will love them, but they look in all the wrong places and try in all the wrong ways. They become sad and lost. Our faith tells us that we exist because, at the moment of our conception, we were thought of with love by God, the Origin of All Existence. We were made so that God can love and care for the world through us and with us.

## FAMILY

*The Lord sets a father in honor over his children,  
a mother’s authority he confirms over her sons. Sirach 3:2*

Learning is not a task, and cannot be reduced to a task. Learning is a person’s “taking in” of the Truth of Things in the world. It requires a “field” or environment that *unconditionally* supports you as a person: that allows mistakes to be made and corrected, that models virtue, and that is transparent and truthful. Absence of a family leaves a person lost and disoriented before the world. They carry this loss within them. Faith speaks to the importance and the integrity of the family.

## The WORLD

*What is man that you are mindful of him, or the son of man that you care for him? Yet you have made him little less than the angels,  
crowned him with glory and honor. You have given him rule over  
the works of your hands. Psalm 8:5-7*

Faith teaches us that Wonder and Awe is the proper attitude for facing the truth and beauty of things in the world. This is the right attitude with which to encounter and explore the world, and unlock its potential. There are **Five Levels of Being** for us to encounter and discover:

**Material Things:** air, water, fire, rocks, minerals and planets. There are rules for studying and learning about them, and there is a right way to treat them and use them.

**Plants** have an invisible power that makes them different than Material Things. This power is *Life*. The rules for studying and learning about a being with *life* are not all the same as those for Material Things. There is a proper way to treat and use them that is different from how to treat and use Material Things.

**Animals** have a second invisible power that Material Things and Plants do not have. This power is *Consciousness*. They can think, learn and

move about in search of what they need. The rules for studying and learning about a being with *consciousness* are not all the same as those for Material Things and Plants. There is a proper way to treat them that is different from how to treat and use Material Things and Plants.

**Human Beings** have a third invisible power that Material Things, Plants and Animals do not have. That power is *Self Awareness*. There is “substance” to this *self-awareness*. Faith calls it an *Immortal Soul*. Human beings can think about themselves and decide for themselves what they want and how to behave. They can know the difference between what is good and what is evil. The rules for studying and learning about a *human being* are not the same as those for Material Things, Plants and Animals. There is a proper way to treat and engage *human beings* that is different from how to treat and use Material Things, Plants and Animals.

**Supernatural Beings (God and Angels):** They have a fourth invisible power. This power is Divine Grace. Supernatural Beings hold the world together and unfold its potential for the good. They live forever. There is a proper way to treat God and have a relationship with God.

**God commands human beings to learn and honor the integrity of all things** and to treat them with respect. God warns us that we must do this if we, and our world are to live and prosper.

## The CLOUD OF ILLUSION

The Map warns you that you can construct imaginative worlds in your mind or escape into virtual realities, which can leave you lost and alienated from the reality and life of the world around you. It is important to be watchful that this does not happen to you.

## The WAY

*I am the Way, the Truth and the Life. John 14:6*

Jesus is the WAY. Jesus is God. God became human to speak to the mind and heart of human beings. We were losing our way and had lost the Map of Life. Jesus came to find us and to walk with us through life. He gave his life on the cross to release us from the power of sin. Jesus teaches us to love as God loves – the way God made us to love. He teaches us that *love is to die to yourself to give life to others*. Jesus joins us to himself and to each other in his Church, which is the Body of Christ in the world.

## WORK

*Prosper the work of our hands, O Lord.  
Prosper the work of our hands! Psalm 90:17*

Faith teaches us that we are made in the image of God, the Creator. We are made to be *creative actors* in our world. Through Jesus and with Jesus, we labor and create, and give life to the world, unfolding its

potential and beauty for the good of all.

## YOUR PASSIONS

Faith teaches that if you follow the path through **the Forest of Virtues**, you will harness the energy of your passions, and will create and give life to the world. You will become a life giver. If you follow the path into the **Swamp of Vices**, you let your passions go with no control, and abuse, destroy and ruin the world, sinking deeper and deeper into emptiness and loss. If you walk with Jesus in the Forest of the Virtues, he will give you his strength and guide you in all you do. If you wander into the Swamp of the Vices, Jesus can lead you out, but you must decide you want to leave, ask for his help, and follow him. Jesus never loses you, but you can let go of him.

## ADVERSITY

*I am the gate. Whoever enters through me will be safe. John 10:9*

Human life will bring most people to face adversity. Illness, loss, disaster, failure, or oppression can knock the floor out from under you. Faith in Jesus is critical. We pray to have the adversity removed or, if that is not to be, we pray for our Savior to open a door in the midst of it and lead us through. He has vowed to do so. When we come out the other side of adversity with him we will be expanded in soul, larger in stature as a whole human being. Without faith in a Savior it is easy to fall into the Pit of Despair. Jesus will not betray your faith in him.

## Transformed from Glory to Glory by the Holy Spirit

*All of us, gazing with unveiled face on the glory of the Lord,  
are being transformed into his image, from glory to glory,  
by the Lord who is the Spirit. 2 Corinthians 3:18*

One, after another – an act of self-sacrificing love, a virtue embraced, a vice released, adversity faced, an insight sought, wisdom gained, something beautiful created – and your very being (your *Immortal Soul*) is transformed by the Holy Spirit into *likeness* of God in Whose *image* you were created.

## YOUR DESTINATION

*Eye has not seen, ear has not heard, nor has it so much as dawned  
upon man, what God has prepared for those who love him.  
1 Corinthians 2:9*

God made human beings to know Him and to be happy with Him forever in Heaven. But God made you free and you have a choice. Life with God must be freely chosen. Your lifetime is given to you to decide whether to accept God’s invitation or not. If you walk with Jesus, you will find joy in being alive and happiness in being who you are. You will bring life to many and arrive at your destination. Those who go to Heaven are those who are fit to make Heaven.