

Prologue

Wilderness to Eternal Significance

The Norwegian Wilderness

A remote cabin in Norway was the trailhead of my *Truventure*. The Norwegian wilderness afforded solitude with God to discuss questions like, *How do I make my life count?* With only the wilderness to distract me, I indulged extravagant time to ask *What are my priorities?* Delving into such questions, candid conversations with God, and living out the answers became my true adventure. The more we candidly talked the more I wanted to view everything from His perspective. This revealed uncomfortable, fiord-sized gaps between my lifestyle and what I believed. I exchanged nominal efforts—what felt like quasi intentionality—with undeterred efforts to maximize this life for eternity.

My Daunting Question

I returned from the Norwegian wilderness to corporate life with a healthy distaste for going through the motions. I exchanged meandering through mind-numbing corporate requirements with strategic intentionality by creating strategy on one page in the form of a *Strategic Pyramid* for my division. The effectiveness of the *Strategic Pyramid* quickly moved me up the corporate ladder, but success in the marketplace created a personal crisis. A daunting question plagued me: *If the marketplace is worthy of strategic effort, isn't my life?* The arduous efforts required to land a vision and strategy only amplified the question, *Why would I work that hard at developing and implementing strategy in the marketplace—and not in my own life?*

As in the Norwegian wilderness, I spent time asking God His perspective. This time the question was, *What is the picture of me being wildly successful?* The question intimidated me but as soon as I took the question to the One Who Knows, His response alleviated what had felt so daunting. Asking God for straightforward answers to strategic questions became the modus operandi of my *Truventure*.

We determined the vision for my life, strategies to land the vision, and target metrics. I placed these in my personal Strategic Pyramid. The process of jointly developing strategic specifics with God centered me and my Strategic Pyramid became a useful grid to examine to the extent I was aligning my life with His plan for me.

A Key Question

One of the most frequently asked questions I hear is, How do I live out my principles in the market place? The problem is internal, not the marketplace, just ask those working in ministry. Furthermore, none of us are immune to the difficulty of living out authentic Christianity in our home. The question soon becomes, How do I authentically live out my Christianity in every aspect of life?

Christ paid for us to authentically live our Christianity in every aspect of life. He waits for us to yield to Him living His life in and through us to accomplish this very thing. So how does this cooperating with Christ work in daily life? Trained as a research scientist, I documented my findings; trained as an engineer, I refined what worked. Some elements of applied strategy are original; others are picked up from the corporate heap of “we did that last year.” I simply implemented the tractive ones for the rest of my life.

Consequently, *Truventure* is my handbook of strategic intentionality in my quest to see things from the Creator’s perspective, to cooperate with the Holy Spirit, to align with Truth Personified, to eliminate the gaps between my lifestyle and His Truth, to maximize this life for eternity. My purpose is not to instruct others to copy my journey, but rather invite them into their own journey with the Lover of their soul. I am not prescribing steps; I am describing a lifestyle that flows from a personalized, Spirit led quest to find one’s own path with Truth Himself.

The Value of *Truventure*

Another frequently asked question is asked several ways, but at the heart of each way the person is seeking to understand value. The most general way is when one asks, What is different before and after one embarks on their *Truventure*?

- Living truth versus merely knowing truth: ruthlessly living out truth in every aspect of life versus selective application.
- Intentionally bringing Christ into every circumstance rather than occasionally or frequently.
- Having a divinely designed vision that resonates with how one was personally designed rather than a vague sense of what success looks like for what you care about most.
- Having simple strategies, target metrics, and measured progress versus hoping for the best sans a clear plan.

The differences before and after one embarks on their *Truventure* have significant, remarkable, and eternal impact.

The marketplace tends to be more direct, What is the value (proposition)? *Truventure* delivers target clarity and tractive execution unto eternal significance. Delivery is truth-based, Spirit-led, and simple. The most difficult thing in this strategy handbook is asking God and yielding to what He says. Others also find it easy; a group of artists declared, I can do this!

Some of us live by the motto, “In God we trust all others must bring data.” We want measured value rather than words. For measured progress in landing my vision I use a composite metric. Before I developed my Strategic Pyramid, I could not articulate the vision of me being wildly successful per God’s grand plan. Within one year of implementing my Strategic Pyramid, my composite metric increased from zero to 63%, then to 80% the second and 95% the third. But wait, it gets better! What God is doing behind the numbers is more meaningful today than yesterday.

A Subterranean Memoir

Truventure is written in the first person so another frequently asked question concerns co-authorship. At a subterranean level, *Truventure* is a memoir. The main thing is what worked for me (Mark) when I applied strategy to life; my story is simply an imbedded stream that runs beneath it. Almost a decade ago, Angela Owen stepped up her Spirit led quest

using the content of *Truventure*. For six years we discussed a pertinent aspect on a weekly basis. This process distilled the essence of similar yet highly personalized *Truventures*. Angela does what I hope readers will do: explore the essence of what worked and implement it in a way that works best for them. Angela, the consummate coach to high performance teams, wrote the Traction Sections and the Epilogue.

A Spirit Led Quest

For me to adequately address the question, How do I make my life count? I had to embrace rather than suppress a healthy intolerance for actions that did not match truths I believed. I had to see God uncensored and embrace that He cannot lie and live accordingly—engaging Truth Himself in every aspect of life. With Him, anything is worth doing poorly on the way to doing it well. As I accelerate to the finish line, I embrace the truth that life is a vapor and need act accordingly. What began with a question from a remote cabin in Norway has become a Spirit led quest for eternal significance—a true adventure, co-investing my short life for all eternity.

How satisfied are you with the one life you have to invest for all eternity?