

TRANSFORMED

How God Changes Us

Be transformed by the renewing of your mind . . .

ROMANS 12:2



A video study by Rick Warren

A Small Group Study Guide Hosted by:



Name: _____

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A Note From Pastor Bobby

Welcome to this 50 day journey of being TRANSFORMED! In the next seven weeks, we will interact with seven key areas that we all face in our lives. In this booklet, you have all seven teachings that will take place in your TRANSFORMED small group. To gain the fullest benefit possible, it is imperative that you get out your calendar and mark off the days and times you will meet as a small group! While Sunday messages on each topic will be uplifting and encouraging, the TRANSFORMED small group experience will be your lifeline.

The church in the Book of Acts grew rapidly because of transformed lives. Conservative estimates conclude that the church in Jerusalem grew to over 100,000 strong in a few short years. This would have been over one-third of the population of the city at that time. The new wine of the Holy Spirit being poured out was contained in the wineskins of large group gatherings and small house group meetings. Later the apostle Paul called what happened in the small groups as “one anothering.”

In a large group, you can greet one another and hear about a moment in one another’s lives, but that is about the extent of “one anothering.” Certainly the value of meeting in a large group is worship, centralized teaching, and vision casting. But in a small group things are much different. EVERYONE has the opportunity to practice their God-given gift within the group! While a large group promotes surface “one anothering,” the small group invites more meaningful relationships.

How God Changes US

Your TRANSFORMED group will provide the practical tools that lead you in transforming your mind. Our minds are a battle ground. But when we choose to renew our minds according to God's word, empowered by the Holy Spirit, the battle ground becomes a life giving well. It is possible to live in this world with peace in our hearts! It begins as we renew our minds. Thanks for taking the journey with others. It's going to be a remarkable time!

God bless you as you are "transformed by the renewing of your mind."

Pastor Bobby

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“BE TRANSFORMED BY THE RENEWING OF YOUR MIND.” ROMANS 12:2 NIV

The only way to truly change your life is to change the way you think. That’s why the Bible says in our theme verse, “Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.” (Romans 12:2 NIV)

What is the difference between “conforming” and “transforming”? According to the dictionary, to conform means to “make or become the same” or “to behave in a conventional way by accepting without question the customs, traditions and prevailing opinions of others.” In other words, to conform is to fit into somebody else’s mold; it’s to do things the way everybody else does.

On the other hand, to transform means to “change the condition, function, nature, character or personality” of something.

***CONFORMING* has to do with BEHAVIOR.**

***TRANSFORMING* has to do with CHARACTER.**

***CONFORMING* is FROM THE OUTSIDE IN.**

***TRANSFORMING* is FROM THE INSIDE OUT.**

Conforming is something we do to ourselves. Transforming is something God does to us. And he transforms us by renewing our minds. You see, God doesn't just want to change your behavior. He wants to change the way you think. The Bible says, "*As a man thinks in his heart, so is he.*" (Proverbs 23:7 NKJV) **Your thoughts control your actions.** If you want to change the way you act, you must start by changing the way you think. If you want to be like Christ, you must learn to think like Christ.

Over the next seven weeks, we are going to study the transforming power of Jesus Christ. Specifically, we'll look at God's plan to transform you in seven key areas of your life: **mental health, spiritual health, emotional health, physical health, relational health, financial health, and vocational health.** We will allow God's Word to renew our minds and change the way we think about God, about ourselves, about our relationships, our finances, our careers—about everything. And when you learn to think differently you will begin to live differently. As you learn to think God's way, you will begin to live God's way.

Transformation is about more than just putting information in your head. It's about living out what God is working in you. The Bible says "Be doers of the Word, and not hearers only" (James 1:22 NKJV). To help you apply what you are learning, we strongly encourage you to set a three month goal for each of the key areas of your life. **Goals turn intentions into actions.** Without a specific goal in mind, you might not get around to applying God's truth to your life. So we have provided instruction in the **Putting It into Practice** section of each session to help you set a three month goal for the key area you are studying.

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Be sure your goal is a **SMART** goal: **Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time-bound.** For example, don't just say, "I want to grow spiritually," or "I want to lose weight." Those are not **SMART goals.** They're too general. A **SMART goal** for your spiritual health might be, "I will memorize Romans 12 in the next ninety days," or "I will spend fifteen minutes in a quiet time every morning for the next three months." A **SMART goal** for your physical health might be "I will lose twenty pounds in the next ninety days." Those are **SMART goals:** that are based on a specific action that is measurable and doable, that relate to the particular area of health you are studying, and that have a deadline.

Once you have set your goal, transfer that goal to the **My Three-Month Goals** list on pages 6-7 of this study guide so that you can have them all in one place for easy reference.

The world is shouting for our attention with answers to our relationship struggles, solutions to our financial trouble, and explanations to our search for meaning. But the world's promises leave us empty and searching for more. God's will is the only answer that promises to **TRANSFORM** our lives from the inside out.

Are you ready to be transformed? Then let's be **TRANSFORMED** together!

HOW TO USE THIS WORKBOOK

A brief explanation of the features of this workbook

MY THREE - MONTH GOALS

Each week you will set a personal goal for the area of health you are studying with your group. Transfer each goal to the My Three-Month Goals page so you can have them all in one place.

WEEKEND SERMON NOTES

You can use this page to take notes on Sunday's sermon each week.

SMALL GROUP STUDY

- ❖ **CHECKING IN:** Open each meeting by briefly discussing a question or two that will help focus everyone's attention on the subject of the lesson.

- ❖ **MEMORY VERSE:** Each week you will find a key Bible verse for your group to memorize together. If someone in the group has a different translation, ask them to read it aloud so the group can get a bigger picture of the meaning of the passage.

- ❖ **VIDEO LESSON:** There is a video lesson for the group to watch together each week. Fill in the blanks in the lesson outlines as you watch the video and be sure to refer back to these outlines during your discussion time.

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- ❖ **DISCOVERY QUESTIONS:** Each video segment is complemented by several questions for group discussion. Please don't feel pressured to discuss every single question. There is no reason to rush through the answers. Give everyone ample opportunity to share their thoughts. If you don't get through all of the discussion questions, that's okay.

- ❖ **PUTTING IT INTO PRACTICE:** Each week you will be challenged to commit to one goal in each of the seven key areas of this study. Be sure to transfer these goals to the My Three-Month Goals on pages 10-11 of this workbook.

- ❖ **PRAYER DIRECTION:** At the end of each session you will find suggestions for your group prayer time. Praying together is one of the greatest privileges of small group life. Please don't take it for granted.

- ❖ **DIVING DEEPER:** This section includes suggestions for books, studies, and other resources for personal and group use.

SMALL GROUP RESOURCES

There are additional small group resources, such as Group Guidelines, Helps for Hosts, Prayer and Praise Reports, etc., in the back of this study guide.

MY THREE-MONTH GOALS

MY THREE-MONTH *MENTAL* HEALTH GOAL

MY THREE-MONTH *SPIRITUAL* HEALTH GOAL

MY THREE-MONTH *EMOTIONAL* HEALTH GOAL

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MY THREE-MONTH *PHYSICAL* HEALTH GOAL

MY THREE-MONTH *RELATIONAL* HEALTH GOAL

MY THREE-MONTH *FINANCIAL* HEALTH GOAL

MY THREE-MONTH *VOCATIONAL* HEALTH GOAL

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How God Changes Us

ROMANS 12:2

Session 1:

Mental Health

Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is – his good, pleasing, and perfect will.

Romans 12:2

How God Changes US

WEEKEND SERMON NOTES:

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SESSION 1:

TRANSFORMED IN MY *MENTAL* HEALTH

❖ CHECKING IN

- If this is your first time to meet as a group, be sure to have everyone introduce themselves.
- Before you begin this study, we recommend that you review the **Small Group Guidelines** as a group.
- Share with the group what you hope to get out of this small group series.
- What role do you think the mind plays in our growth as followers of Christ?

❖ MEMORY VERSE

Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is - His good, pleasing, and perfect will.

Romans 12:2 (NIV)

❖ WATCH THE VIDEO LESSON NOW AND FOLLOW ALONG IN YOUR OUTLINE



❖ TRANSFORMED IN MY MENTAL HEALTH

Whatever gets your mind gets you!

Though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.

2 Corinthians 10:3-5 (NIV)

To Make The Most of Your Mind ...

- **Don't believe everything you _____ .**

You and I have an amazing ability to lie to ourselves. We do it all the time.

The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?

Jeremiah 17:9 (NIV)

Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves.

2 Corinthians 13:5 (NIV)

- **Guard your mind against _____ .**

A wise person is hungry for truth, while the fool feeds on trash.

Proverbs 15:14 (NLT)

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There are three types of brain food: toxic food, junk food, and healthy food.

I will not set before my eyes anything that is worthless.

Psalms 101:3 (ESV)

- **Never let up on _____ .**

Intelligent people are always ready to learn. Their ears are open for knowledge.

Proverbs 18:5 (NLT)

There are two ways to store up knowledge: reading and relationships. Your life will be largely influenced by the books you read and the people you meet.

Those who get wisdom do themselves a favor, and those who love learning will succeed.

Proverbs 19:8 (NCV)

It's wise to learn from experience. It's wiser to learn from the experiences of others – and it's a lot less painful.

- **Renew your mind daily with _____ .**

Change doesn't start in your behavior. It starts in your thoughts.

Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.

Romans 12:2 (NLT)

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You will keep in perfect peace all who trust in you, all whose thoughts are fixed on you!

Isaiah 26:3 (NLT)

- **Let God stretch you** _____ .

Now glory be to God, who by his mighty power at work within us is able to do far more than we would ever dare to ask or even dream of – infinitely beyond our highest prayers, desires, thoughts, or hopes. May He be given glory forever.

Ephesians 3:20-21 (TLB)

Nothing happens until somebody starts dreaming. God cannot help you reach your goals if you don't have any goals. He cannot fulfill your dreams if you don't have any dreams. He cannot exceed your expectations if you don't have any expectations.

Where there is no vision, the people perish.

Proverbs 29:18 (KJV)

God wants you to dream big dreams so you can accomplish great things for His glory.

T _____

H _____

I _____

N _____

K _____

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❖ **DISCOVERY QUESTIONS (Pick at least one or two)**

- Why is it so easy to **lie to ourselves**?

- Pastor Rick talked about **toxic food, junk food, and healthy food** for your brain. What could you do to give your brain a healthier diet?

- What specific **topics** and **habits** do you want to learn about through your reading and relationships?

- The Bible says, “*You will keep in perfect peace all who trust in you, all whose thoughts are fixed on you!*” (Isaiah 26:3 NLT). What helps you **fix your thoughts on God**?

❖ **PUTTING IT INTO PRACTICE**

Where do you want to be three-months from now with your mental health? What is one thing you will do to take a step in that direction? Not one thing you **could** do, or **might** do, but one thing you **will** do. Review Rick’s video outline to help you with ideas. We know that goals that are not expressed are very rarely met, so share your goal with one other person in your group.

Write your mental health goal in the space below.

MY THREE-MONTH MENTAL HEALTH GOAL

When it comes to setting goals, it is important that you make a plan and then check your progress on a regular basis. Goals that are not written down and set in motion are just ideas, and we rarely feel any commitment to following through on all of our ideas. To help you reach your goals, we provided the **My Three-Month Goals** list. The purpose of the **My Three-Month Goals** list is to help you begin to put into practice the things you are learning in this study.

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We recommend that you review your **My Three-Month Goals** list on a regular basis to remind yourself of your goals and to track your progress. You may even want to set a time in the future as a group to share how each group member is doing with their goals and celebrate what God is doing in each of your lives.

For the session, transfer your Three-Month Spiritual Health Goal to your **My Three-Month Goals** list.

❖ PRAYER DIRECTION

In your prayer time this week, focus on the prayer requests from the **Small Group Prayer and Praise Report**. Also pray for the action steps each person wants to take in the area of Mental Health. You may want to have each person pray for the person on their right going around the circle, or pair up in groups of two.

❖ **DIVING DEEPER - Want to go deeper in your Mental Health?**

FOR YOU

- Read the Memory Verse every day this week as a part of your quiet time. See if you can memorize it before your next group meeting.

Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is - His good, pleasing, and perfect will.

Romans 12:2 (NIV)

FOR THE GROUP

Consider the following resources:

- **Victory over Darkness** – Neil T. Anderson (Book, DVD and Study Guide)
- **Bondage Breaker** – Neil T. Anderson (Book, DVD, Interactive Workbook)
- **Crush the Chatter Box** – Steven Furtick/ Elevation Church (Video Series - If interested see Chris in the church office for downloads)

**Feel free to contact the church office for help with discernment in selecting daily devotions, books and other resources.

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How God Changes Us

ROMANS 12:2

Session 2:
Spiritual Health

And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.

Hebrews (11:6)

How God Changes US

WEEKEND SERMON NOTES:

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SESSION 2

TRANSFORMED IN MY *SPIRITUAL* HEALTH

❖ CHECKING IN

- If this is your first time to meet as a group, or if you have any new group members, be sure to introduce yourselves.
- What was something that was **the most meaningful to you** concerning mental health you remember from last week?
- Before you begin this study, we recommend that you review the **Small Group Guidelines** as a group.
- What role do you think the Holy spirit plays in our growth as followers of Christ?

❖ MEMORY VERSE

And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.

Hebrews 11:6 (NIV)

❖ WATCH THE VIDEO LESSON NOW AND FOLLOW ALONG IN YOUR OUTLINE

>>

❖ TRANSFORMED IN MY *SPIRITUAL* HEALTH

1. In order to be spiritually healthy we must first see God as he _____ is.

Have you considered the lengths that God went to save you from yourself and your sin and bring you back into relationship with the Father!

“But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”

Romans 5:8

Here are four traits about God the Father that he offers to us:

- God is our creator.
- God is caring
- God is consistent
- God is capable.

Romans 12:2 says that when our mind is renewed, then we will find out that God’s will for our life is good, pleasing, and perfect!

2. Once you have settled that God loves you, then the mark of a spiritual healthy person is to _____ God back supremely!

It’s not how much you know or how many scriptures you can quote, but rather if you are putting God’s Word into practice in your life.

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The most important commandment is this . . . you must love the Lord your God with all your heart, [passionately], all your soul, [willfully], and all your mind [thoughtfully], and all your strength [practically-live like you love him].

Mark 12:29-30 (NLT)

Notice the order in which Jesus places spiritual health:

- First, the heart! The heart is the level where we hear his voice. When your heart shifts you have got it!
- Second, Jesus says your soul. This is the experiential part of our lives. Feelings are included in the soul.
- Third, Jesus references that the mind needs to love as well. Which is the focus of this series.
- Finally, Jesus calls us to love with our strength. That means we take action on what we believe.

3. The third habit of a spiritually healthy person is that they purpose to _____:

Blessed is the man who listens to me, watching daily at my doors, waiting at my doorway.

Proverbs 8:34 (NIV)

Spiritual health is having a daily dialogue with God about matters that concern you and him. It includes both listening and talking with God and ultimately an exchange of your problems for his perspective.

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Every person that ever had great impact for God always had a consistent daily time with God. It's an important part of their spiritual health.

4. The fourth practice of spiritually healthy people is they _____ (read, study) and _____ the word of God.

Jesus says you change only when you have the _____ information and _____ it. (Matthew 7:24-26)

Oh, the joys of those who do not follow the advice of the wicked, or stand around with sinners, or join in with scoffers. 2 But they delight in doing everything the LORD wants; day and night they think about his law. 3 They are like trees planted along the riverbank, bearing fruit each season without fail. Their leaves never wither, and in all they do, they prosper.

Psalm 1:1-3 (NLT)

But the man who looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it — he will be blessed in what he does.

James 1:25

5. The fifth practice of a spiritually healthy person is learning to _____ others.

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A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.

John 13:34-35

If anyone says, "I love God," yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen.

I John 4:20

Spiritual health is when we love one another even when we don't _____ with each other!

6. Another aspect of spiritual health is becoming a _____ and _____ others.

Take the teaching that you heard me proclaim in the presence of many witnesses, and entrust them to reliable people, who will be able to teach others also.

2 Timothy 2:2 (TEV)

Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.

Matt 28:19-20 NIV

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The best option for this to take place is in a small group, just like you are meeting in now. You can't be a disciple in isolation. Growing in Christ happens best when we are in the context of meaningful relationships.

If you want to grow in love and grow in your faith, a small group is essential; otherwise there is no real accountability to find victory.

7. The final aspect of someone who is spiritually healthy is they _____ others _____.

Serving others is more than just helping someone out. It's actually ministering the grace of God to someone.

Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.

Galatians 6:10 NIV

Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, 24 since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.

Colossians 3:23-24 NIV

To grow spiritually you must decide you want to! It's a daily choice to read your Bible, pray and love others. It requires us to prioritize our schedules to make sure we are placing the most important things first.

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❖ **DISCOVERY QUESTIONS (Pick at least one or two)**

- What has been your earliest association in relating to God as Father? Are they good, bad, or blank?

- In the video you learned about the importance of **daily time with God**. How do you have **daily time with God**? What is your normal routine? What typically interferes with your **time with God**?

- Why is being in a small group and serving others so important to your **spiritual growth**? What can you learn through relationships that you can't learn on your own?

- In the video Pastor Bobby said, "**Spiritual growth is not automatic. It is a choice.**" What seems to get in the way of your spiritual growth? What has been most effective in helping you grow?

❖ **PUTTING IT INTO PRACTICE**

In this session we discussed the seven habits that help us grow spiritually. **Which of these habits do you need to work on the most? What is one thing you can do to begin to make that habit a reality in your daily life in the next three months?** Talk about this with your group and share ideas with each other.

Settle on one thing that you can do and make a **three-month goal** to grow in this area of spiritual health. Write your goal in the space below.

MY THREE-MONTH SPIRITUAL HEALTH GOAL

For the session, transfer your Three-Month Spiritual Health Goal to your **My Three-Month Goals** list.

❖ **PRAYER DIRECTION**

One way we can show our love for one another is by committing to pray for one another. Take some time as a group to share your prayer requests.

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❖ **DIVING DEEPER - Want to go deeper in your Spiritual Health?**

FOR YOU

- Read the Memory Verse every day this week as a part of your quiet time. See if you can memorize it before your next group meeting.

And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.

Hebrews 11:6

FOR THE GROUP

Consider the following resources:

- **Purpose Driven Life** – Rick Warren (Book, Study Guide and DVD Series)
 - The Question of **Existence**: *Why am I alive?*
 - The Question of **Significance**: *Does my life matter?*
 - The Question of **Purpose**: *What on earth am I here for?*
- **Supernatural Ways of Royalty** – Kris Vallotton (Book and Workbook)
- **Living the God Breathed Life** – Thom Gardner (Book)

**Feel free to contact the church office for help with discernment in selecting daily devotions, books and other resources.

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ROMANS 12:2

Session 3:
Emotional Health

Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.

Mathew 11:28 (NIV)

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WEEKEND SERMON NOTES:

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SESSION 3

TRANSFORMED IN MY *EMOTIONAL* HEALTH

❖ CHECKING IN

- What was something that was **the most meaningful to you** concerning spiritual health from last week?
- Before you begin this study, we recommend that you review the **Small Group Guidelines** as a group.
- When you hurt yourself (stub your toe, whack your thumb with a hammer, etc.) do you tend to stuff it, yell at it, cry about it, or dance around?

❖ MEMORY VERSE

Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.

Matthew 11:28 (NIV)

❖ WATCH THE VIDEO LESSON NOW AND FOLLOW ALONG IN YOUR OUTLINE



❖ TRANSFORMED IN MY *EMOTIONAL* HEALTH

He heals the broken-hearted and bandages their wounds.

Psalm 147:3 (TEV)

Five Steps Toward Emotional Health

- _____ **my** _____ .

You'll never be emotionally healthy until you face your feelings straight on.

I kept very quiet . . . but I became even more upset. I became very angry inside, and as I thought about it, my anger burned.

Psalm 39:2-3 (NCV)

Holding on to hurts is like carrying hot coals in your heart – you're the one who's going to get burned. When you swallow your hurt, your stomach keeps score.

You must be honest with yourself, honest with God, and honest with one other person.

When I kept things to myself, I felt weak deep inside me. I moaned all day long.

Psalm 32:3 (NCV)

- _____ **those who have** _____ .

One of the most difficult decisions you'll make in life is this: "Do I want to get well or do I want to get even?"

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It was while we were sinners that Christ died for us!

Romans 5:8 (TEV)

Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

Ephesians 4:31-32 (NIV)

You have kept a record of my tears.

Psalm 56:8 (TEV)

Never pay back evil for evil . . . never avenge yourselves. Leave that to God, for he has said that he will repay those who deserve it. [Don't take the law into your own hands].

Romans 12:17-19 (TLB)

- **Replace _____ with _____.**

Let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think.

Romans 12:2 (NLT)

Jesus, who makes people holy, and all those who are made holy have the same Father. That is why Jesus isn't ashamed to call them brothers and sisters.

Hebrews 2:11 (GWT)

If you want to change the way you feel about your life, you have to change the way you think about your life. Replace old lies with God's truths.

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- _____ **on the** _____ .

Put your heart right . . . Reach out to God . . . face the world again, firm and courageous. Then all your troubles will fade from your memory, like floods that are past and remembered no more.

Job 11:13-16 (TEV)

Your past is not your future. The old you is not the new you.

Look straight ahead with honest confidence; don't hang your head in shame.

Proverbs 4:25 (TEV)

- _____ **to help** _____ .

God wants to redeem your pain. He wants to use your experiences to help other people. That's what ministry is all about.

[God] comforts us every time we have trouble, so when others have trouble, we can comfort them with the same comfort God gives us.

2 Corinthians 1:4 (NCV)

When someone becomes a Christian, he or she becomes a brand new person. He or she is not the same anymore. A new life has begun!

2 Corinthians 5:17 (TLB)

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❖ DISCOVERY QUESTIONS (Pick at least one or two)

- **God never wastes a hurt.** Your greatest ministry will come from your deepest pain. Would any like to share a personal story of how God brought emotional healing into your life? This is great practice for sharing your faith with a non-believing friend.

- The Bible says, “*When I kept things to myself, I felt weak deep inside me. I moaned all day long*” (Psalm 32:3 NCV). Why do you think we would rather hide the things that have happened to us instead of revealing them to someone?

- Why is it so hard to forgive when we have been wronged? What happens if we choose not to forgive? What could happen if we do forgive?

- The Bible says, “*Be made new in the attitude of your minds*” (Ephesians 4:23 NIV). Pastor Rick said, “If you want to change the way you feel about your life, you have to change the way you think about your life.” What is one thought you need to change about yourself?

❖ PUTTING IT INTO PRACTICE

Where do you want to be three-months from now with your emotional health? What is one thing you will do to take a step in that direction? Not one thing you **could** do, or **might** do, but one thing you **will** do. We know that goals that are not expressed are very rarely met, so share your goal with one other person in your group.

MY THREE-MONTH EMOTIONAL HEALTH GOAL

❖ PRAYER DIRECTION

In your prayer time this week, focus on the prayer requests from the **Small Group Prayer and Praise Report**. If anyone shared a hurt or needs prayer, be sure to pray for those things during your prayer time. If you are short on time or your group members would feel more comfortable sharing with one other person, you might want to pair up and pray for each other.

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❖ **DIVING DEEPER - Want to go deeper in your Emotional Health?**

FOR YOU

- Read the Memory Verse every day this week as a part of your quiet time. See if you can memorize it before your next group meeting.

*Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened,
and I will give you rest.*

Matthew 11:28

FOR THE GROUP

- Consider the following resources:
 - Emotionally Healthy Spirituality – Peter Scazzero (Book, Workbook, Video Series)
 - Emotionally Healthy Women - Geri Scazzero (Book, Workbook, Video Series) (men will benefit just a much!)

**Feel free to contact the church office for help with discernment in selecting daily devotions, books and other resources.

How God Changes US

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How God Changes Us

ROMANS 12:2

Session 4: Physical Health

Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies.

1 Corinthians 6:19-20 (NIV)

How God Changes US

WEEKEND SERMON NOTES:

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SESSION 4

TRANSFORMED IN MY *PHYSICAL* HEALTH

❖ CHECKING IN

- What was something that was **the most meaningful to you** concerning emotional health that you remember from the last meeting?

- What impact do you think your physical health has on your spiritual health?

❖ MEMORY VERSE

Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies.

1 Corinthians 6:19-20 (NIV)

❖ WATCH THE VIDEO LESSON NOW AND FOLLOW ALONG IN YOUR OUTLINE



❖ TRANSFORMED IN MY **PHYSICAL** HEALTH

I pray that you may enjoy good health and that all may go well with you, even as your soul is getting along well.

3 John 1:2 (NIV)

God wants us to take care of our bodies, not only because that's where we live, but also because that's where He lives. **Physical health is a spiritual discipline.**

I have the right to do anything," you say—but not everything is beneficial. "I have the right to do anything"—but I will not be mastered by anything. You say, "Food for the stomach and the stomach for food, and God will destroy them both." The body, however, is not meant for sexual immorality but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. By his power God raised the Lord from the dead, and he will raise us also. Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ himself? Shall I then take the members of Christ and unite them with a prostitute? Never! Do you not know that he who unites himself with a prostitute is one with her in body? For it is said, "The two will become one flesh." But whoever is united with the Lord is one with him in spirit. Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a person commits are outside the body, but whoever sins sexually, sins against their own body. Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies.

1 Corinthians 6:12-20 (NIV)

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What God Says About My Body ...

- **My body is God's _____.**

You created every part of me; you put me together in my mother's womb ... I am fearfully and wonderfully made.

Psalm 139:13-14 (TEV/NIV)

- **God expects me to _____ my body.**

I will not be mastered by anything.

1 Corinthians 6:12 (NIV)

- **My body will be _____ after I die.**

By his power God raised the Lord from the dead, and will raise us also.

1 Corinthians 6:14 (NIV)

- **My body is connected to the _____.**

Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ Himself?

1 Corinthians 6:15 (NIV)

Jesus gave his body for you and He wants you to honor Him with yours.

- **The Holy Spirit _____ my body.**

How God Changes US

Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own;

1 Corinthians 6:19 (NIV)

Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in your midst? . . . God's temple is sacred, and you together are that temple.

1 Corinthians 3:16-17 (NIV)

You are God's dwelling place on earth.

For we are the temple of the living God.

2 Corinthians 6:16 (NIV)

- **Jesus _____ on the cross.**

You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies.

1 Corinthians 6:19-20 (NIV)

I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God. This is your spiritual act of worship.

Romans 12:1 (NIV)

Do you want to get well?

John 5:6 (NIV)

God wants you to be physically healthy so that you can accomplish great things for his kingdom.

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❖ **DISCOVERY QUESTIONS (Pick at least one or two)**

- The Bible says **your body is God's property** and that you are the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit. How does that affect the way you see yourself? What do you think you will do differently knowing this fact?

- God expects you to **manage your body**. Why is that so important to God?

- What does it look like to **manage your body**? How good of a manager do you think you are?

- Why do you think most Christians tend to put more emphasis on their spirit or mind as opposed to taking care of their bodies?

❖ PUTTING IT INTO PRACTICE

Where do you want to be three months from now with your physical health? What is one thing you will do to take a step in that direction? Not one thing you **could** do, or **might** do, but one thing you **will** do. We know that goals that are not expressed are very rarely met, so share your goal with one other person in your group.

Write your physical health goal in the space below.

MY THREE-MONTH PHYSICAL HEALTH GOAL

❖ PRAYER DIRECTION

Spend some time praying for the prayer requests you have been sharing with one another (Remember to record them on the Small Group Prayer and Praise). You may want to focus on some of the physical challenges or goals you have set in your study this week.

TRANSFORMED

❖ **DIVING DEEPER - Want to go deeper in your Physical Health?**

FOR YOU

- Read the Memory Verse every day this week as a part of your quiet time. See if you can memorize it before your next group meeting.

Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body.

1 Corinthians 6:19-20

- Visit **www.DanielPlan.com** for books or other resources to help you get physically healthy.

FOR THE GROUP

Consider for your next group study **THE DANIEL PLAN** six-week, video-based small group study. It will introduce you to five essentials for better health: Faith, Food, Fitness, Focus, and Friends.

**Feel free to contact the church office for help with discernment in selecting daily devotions, books and other resources.

How God Changes US

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How God Changes Us

ROMANS 12:2

Session 5:

Relational Health

*Above all, love each other deeply,
because love covers over a
multitude of sins.*

1 Peter 4:8 (NIV)

How God Changes US

WEEKEND SERMON NOTES:

TRANSFORMED

SESSION 5

TRANSFORMED IN MY *RELATIONAL* HEALTH

❖ CHECKING IN

- What was something that was **the most meaningful to you** concerning physical health from last week?

- When it comes to personal conflict, are you a skunk or a turtle? Turtles withdraw quietly into their shells until the trouble is past. When skunks are in conflict, they let everybody know about it.

❖ MEMORY VERSE

Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins.

1 Peter 4:8 (NIV)

❖ WATCH THE VIDEO LESSON NOW AND FOLLOW ALONG IN YOUR OUTLINE



❖ TRANSFORMED IN MY **RELATIONAL** HEALTH

There Are Two Kinds of Friends

- _____ friends are the result of _____.
- _____ friends are the result of _____.

A mirror reflects a man's face, but what he is really like is shown by the kind of friends he chooses.

Proverbs 27:19 (TLB)

The righteous choose their friends carefully.

Proverbs 12:26 (NIV)

Five Kinds of People to Avoid as Close Friends

- _____ people

Our friends, we command you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to keep away from all believers who are living a lazy life . . .

2 Thessalonians 3:6 (TEV)

- _____ people

Don't make friends with people who have hot, violent tempers. You might learn their habits and not be able to change.

Proverbs 22:24-25 (TEV)

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- _____ **people**

I told you not to associate with immoral people. Now I did not mean [unbelievers] who are immoral or greedy or are thieves, or who worship idols. To avoid them you would have to get out of the world completely. What I meant was that you should not associate with a person who calls himself a believer but is immoral or greedy or worships idols or is a slanderer or a drunkard or a thief. Don't even sit down to eat with such a person.

1 Corinthians 5:9-11(TSV)

- _____ **people**

Do not eat the food of a stingy man . . . for he is the kind of man who is always thinking about the cost. 'Eat and drink,' he says to you, but his heart is not with you.

Proverbs 23:6-7 (NIV)

- _____ **people**

Don't team up with those who are unbelievers.

2 Corinthians 6:14a (NLT)

Choose Close Friends Who Will . . .

- _____ **me mentally**

He who walks with the wise grows wise.

Proverbs 13:20a (NIV)

As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another.

Proverbs 27:17 (NIV)

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- _____ **me emotionally**

A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for adversity.

Proverbs 27:17 (NIV)

Bear one another's burdens.

Galatians 6:2 (NKJV)

- _____ **me spiritually**

Encourage one another and build each other up.

1 Thessalonians 5:11 (NIV)

How can I attract that kind of friend? By being that kind of friend.

HOW TO BUILD HEALTHY FRIENDSHIPS

Get interested in _____.

Unfriendly people care only about themselves.

Proverbs 18:1 (NLT)

Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.

Philippians 2:4 (NKJV)

- **Don't be a _____.**

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Do everything without complaining and arguing, so that no one can criticize you. Live clean innocent lives, as children of God, shining like bright lights in a world full of crooked and perverse people.

Philippians 2:14-15 (NLT)

- **Be a** _____.

Be quick to listen and slow to speak.

James 1:19 (CEV)

Counsel in the heart of man is like deep water; but a man of understanding will draw it out.

Proverbs 20:5 (KJV)

- **Accept people** _____.

Accept one another . . . just as Christ accepted you.

Romans 15:7 (NIV)

A friend loves at all times.

Proverbs 17:17A (NIV)

- **Help people** _____.

Honor one another above yourselves.

Romans 12:10 (NIV)

Don't be selfish; don't try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves.

Philippians 2:3 (NLT)

How God Changes US

- **Be** _____ .

Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep.

Romans 12:15 (NKJV)

- **Stick with them in** _____ .

There are “friends” who pretend to be friends, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.

Proverbs 18:24 (TLB)

Two are better than one because . . . if one falls down, his friend can help him up. But pity the man who falls and has no one to help him up!

Ecclesiastes 4:9-10 (NIV)

- **Share** _____ **with them.**

Go back home and tell everyone how much God has done for you. “The man then went all over town, telling everything that Jesus had done for him.

Luke 8:39 (CEV)

Do to others as you would have them do to you.

Luke 6:31 (NIV)

I do not call you servants any longer . . . Instead, I call you friends.

John 15:15 (TEV)

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❖ **DISCOVERY QUESTIONS (Pick at least one or two)**

- The Bible says, “*Spur one another on toward love and good deeds*” (Hebrews 10:24 NIV). We all need spiritual encouragers in our lives. Who is a spiritual encourager to you? What are some ways they encourage you?

- Review the three qualities of a close friend: People who challenge you mentally, support you emotionally, and strengthen you spiritually. Remember, to find that kind of friend, you need to be that kind of friend. Which of these characteristics do you need to develop in your own life?

- Which of Pastor Rick’s eight ways to build healthy friendships is the most important to you and why?

❖ **PUTTING IT INTO PRACTICE**

Where do you want to be three-months from now with your relational health? What is one thing you will do to take a step in that direction? Not one thing you **could** do, or **might** do, but one thing you **will** do. Review Rick’s video outline to help you with ideas. We know that goals that are not expressed are very rarely met, so share your goal with one other person in your group.

Write your relational health goal in the space below.

My Three-Month Relational Health Goal

❖ **PRAYER DIRECTION**

- Do you have any friends who don’t know Jesus Christ? Pray for their salvation with your group.
- Be sure to pray for the requests in the **Small Group Prayer and Praise List**.
- Pray together about your three-month goal to build healthy relationships.

TRANSFORMED

❖ **DIVING DEEPER - Want to go deeper in your Relational Health?**

FOR YOU

- Read the Memory Verse every day this week as a part of your quiet time. See if you can memorize it before your next group meeting.

Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins.

1 Peter 4:8 (NIV)

FOR THE GROUP

Consider the following resources:

- **Keep your Love On** – Danny Silk (Book, Workbook, Video Series)
- **Battle Cry for Your Marriage** – Larry Kreider (Book/Workbook)

**Feel free to contact the church office for help with discernment in selecting daily devotions, books and other resources.

How God Changes US

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How God Changes Us

ROMANS 12:2

Session 6:
Financial Health

No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.

Mathew 6:24 (NIV)

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WEEKEND SERMON NOTES:

TRANSFORMED

SESSION 6

TRANSFORMED IN MY *FINANCIAL*
HEALTH

❖ **CHECKING IN**

- What was something that was **the most meaningful to you** concerning relational health from last week?

- When it comes to money are you more of a **saver or a spender**.

❖ **MEMORY VERSE**

No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.

Matthew 6:24 (NKJV)

❖ **WATCH THE VIDEO LESSON NOW AND FOLLOW ALONG IN YOUR OUTLINE**



❖ TRANSFORMED IN MY *FINANCIAL*
HEALTH

Seven Habits for Financial Health

- **I must trust God as my _____ and _____.**

Everything comes from [God] and exists by his power and is intended for his glory.

Romans 11:36 (NLT)

Remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth.

Deuteronomy 8:18 (NIV)

- **I must keep _____.**

Riches can disappear fast ... so watch your business interest closely. Know the state of your flocks and your herds.

Proverbs 27:23-24 (TLB)

- **I must give the first _____ back to God.**

The purpose of tithing is to teach you always to put God first in your lives.

Deuteronomy 8:18 (NIV)

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Honor the Lord by giving him the first part of all your income, and he will fill your barns [to overflowing]!

Proverbs 3:9-10 (TLB)

- **I must _____ and _____ for the future.**

The wise man saves for the future, but the foolish man spends whatever he gets.

Proverbs 21:20 (TLB)

- **I must set up a _____ to get myself out of debt.**

Don't withhold repayment of your debts.

Proverbs 3:27 (TLB)

Let no debt remain outstanding.

Romans 13:8 (NIV)

- **I must _____ my spending.**

Plan carefully and you will have plenty; if you act too quickly, you will never have enough.

Proverbs 21:5 (TEV)

Stupid people spend their money as fast as they get it.

Proverbs 21:20b (TEV)

- **I must _____ what I have.**

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Godliness with contentment is great gain.

1 Timothy 6:6 (NIV)

It is better to be satisfied with what you have than to be always wanting something else.

Ecclesiastes 6:9 (TEV)

Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have, for [God] has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you."

Hebrews 13:5 (ESV)

Don't worry . . . Your heavenly Father already knows perfectly well [what you need], and he will give [it] to you if you give him first place in your life and live as he wants you to.

Matthew 6:31-33 (TLB)

You have to decide if you are going to trust God or yourself with your finances. Are you going to do it your way or are you going to do it God's way?

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❖ **DISCOVERY QUESTIONS (Pick at least one or two)**

- What difference does it make when you consider that **your money is on loan from God?**

- How might your financial habits change if you asked yourself every day, **“How does God want me to spend his money?”**

- Why do money issues cause so much stress in people’s lives? What would life look like if we put our **trust in God instead of our finances?**

- Why do you think so many people find it hard to budget? What tools have you found helpful in “telling your money where it should go”?

❖ **PUTTING IT INTO PRACTICE**

Where do you want to be three-months from now with your financial health? What is one thing you will do to take a step in that direction? Not one thing you **could** do, or **might** do, but one thing you **will** do. Review Rick’s video outline to help you with ideas. We know that goals that are not expressed are very rarely met, so share your goal with one other person in your group.

Write your financial health goal in the space below.

My Three-Month Financial Health Goal

❖ **PRAYER DIRECTION**

Pray for your group’s prayer requests. Be sure to record their requests on the group’s **prayer and praise report**. Be sure to remember and pray for any financial needs that might have been expressed in your time together as a group.

TRANSFORMED

❖ **DIVING DEEPER - Want to go deeper in your Financial Health?**

FOR YOU

- Read the Memory Verse every day this week as a part of your quiet time. See if you can memorize it before your next group meeting.

No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.

Matthew 6:24

FOR THE GROUP

Consider the following resources:

- **Financial Peace University** – Dave Ramsey (Workbook and Video Series)
- **Path to a Prosperous Life** – Brian Souder (book)
- **The Blessed Life** – Robert Morris (Book and Video Series)

Financial Peace University (FPU)* is an excellent resource! It teaches God's ways of handling money. Through video teaching, class discussions and interactive small group activities, **FPU presents biblical, practical steps to get from where you are to where you've dreamed you could be.

Crossroads has **Financial Peace University available** to LIFE groups that are be interested. Perhaps it will something to consider for your next small group experience.

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How God Changes Us

ROMANS 12:2

Session 7:
Vocational Health

*Whatever you do, work at it with
all your heart, as working for the
Lord and not for men.*

Colossians 3:23 (NIV)

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WEEKEND SERMON NOTES:

TRANSFORMED

SESSION 7

TRANSFORMED IN MY *VOCATIONAL* HEALTH

❖ CHECKING IN

- What was something that was **the most meaningful to you** concerning financial health from last week?

- If you could have any job in the world, what would it be and why?

❖ MEMORY VERSE

“Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord and not for men.”

Colossians 3:23 (NIV)

❖ WATCH THE VIDEO LESSON NOW AND FOLLOW ALONG IN YOUR OUTLINE



❖ TRANSFORMED IN MY *VOCATIONAL* HEALTH

What profit is to a man if he gains the whole world and loses his own soul?

Matthew 16:26 (NKJV)

SEVEN BIBLICAL ATTITUDES FOR A HEALTHY WORK LIFE

- **I must start working _____ wherever I am.**

Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart.

Colossians 3:23 (NIV)

- **The job is a _____ from God.**

Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much . . . If you have not been trustworthy with someone else's property, who will give you property of your own?

Luke 16:10-12 (NIV)

- **God is _____.**

Work hard so God can say to you, "Well done." Be a good workman, one who does not need to be ashamed when God examines your work.

2 Timothy 2:15 (TLB)

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- **My _____ determines my _____.**

The diligent find freedom in their work; the lazy are oppressed by work.

Proverbs 12:24 (MSG)

Never be lazy in your work, but serve the Lord enthusiastically.

Romans 12:11 (TLB)

- **I must understand who I'm really _____.**

Work hard and cheerfully at whatever you do, as though you were working for the Lord rather than for people. Remember that the Lord will give you an inheritance as your reward, and the Master you are serving is Christ.

Colossians 3:23-24 (NIV)

- **I must concentrate on building _____.**

- **I must care about _____.**

Whatever you do, do it with kindness and love.

1 Corinthians 16:14 (TLB)

Don't be concerned only about your own interest, but also be concerned about the interests of others.

Philippians 2:4 (GWT)

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Always be humble and gentle. Be patient with each other, making allowance for each other's faults because of your love.

Ephesians 4:2 (NLT)

- **I must exceed what is _____.**

Servants, do what you're told by your earthly masters. And don't just do the minimum that will get you by. Do your best.

Colossians 3:22 (MSG)

If anyone requires you to go one mile, go two miles with him.

Matthew 5:41 (NJB)

- **I must expand my skills with _____.**

If the axe is dull and its edge is unsharpened, more strength is needed but skill will bring success.

Ecclesiastes 10:10 (NIV)

- **I must dedicate my work to be used for _____.**

Commit your work to the Lord, and then your plans will succeed.

Proverbs 16:3 (NLT)

We are Christ's ambassadors.

2 Corinthians 5:20 (NLT)

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❖ DISCOVERY QUESTIONS (Pick at least one or two)

- What does it look like for you to live for the glory of God in your workplace? What are some practical ways you can **turn your work into an act of worship**?

- Think of one person you know who could use some **encouragement** in their work this week. What can you do to help them?

- The Bible says, “*We are Christ’s ambassadors*” (2 Corinthians 5:20 NLT). What does an ambassador do? Whose interest does an ambassador represent? How can you be Christ’s ambassador in your workplace?

- How many of the things that are frustrating you at work right now would be no big deal if you chose to **see God as your boss**? What is one thing you think would change in your perspective and attitude towards your work?

❖ PUTTING IT INTO PRACTICE

Where do you want to be three-months from now with your relational health? What is one thing you will do to take a step in that direction? Not one thing you **could** do, or **might** do, but one thing you **will** do. Review Rick's video outline to help you with ideas. We know that goals that are not expressed are very rarely met, so share your goal with one other person in your group.

Write your vocational health goal in the space below.

My Three-Month Vocational Health Goal

❖ PRAYER DIRECTION

Spend some time praying for each other's workplace and the roles each of you play in that setting.

If there are any prayer requests related to work, add them to the **small group prayer and praise report list**.

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❖ **DIVING DEEPER - Want to go deeper in your Vocational Health?**

FOR YOU

- Read the Memory Verse every day this week as a part of your quiet time. See if you can memorize it before your next group meeting.

Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord and not for men.

Colossians 3:23

FOR THE GROUP

Consider the following resources:

- **Work as Worship** – J.P. Greear (Bible Study and Video Series)
- **Your Work Matters to God** – Sherman and Hendricks (Book, Workbook, Video Series)

**Feel free to contact the church office for help with discernment in selecting daily devotions, books and other resources.

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Host and Small Group Resources

HELP FOR HOSTS

CONGRATULATIONS! As the host of your small group, you have responded to the call to help shepherd Jesus' flock. Few other tasks in the family of God surpass the contribution you will be making. As you prepare to facilitate your group, whether it is one session or the entire series, here are a few thoughts to keep in mind.

Remember you are not alone. God knows everything about you, and he knew you would be asked to facilitate your group. Even though you may not feel ready, this is common for all good hosts. God promises, "I will never leave you; I will never abandon you" (Hebrews 13:5 TEV). Whether you are facilitating for one evening, several weeks, or a lifetime, you will be blessed as you serve.

- 1. DON'T TRY TO DO IT ALONE.** Pray right now for God to help you build a healthy team. If you can enlist a co-host to help you shepherd the group, you will find your experience much richer. This is your chance to involve as many people as you can in building a healthy group. All you have to do is ask people to help. You'll be surprised at the response.
- 2. BE FRIENDLY AND BE YOURSELF.** God wants to use your unique gifts and temperament. Be sure to greet people at the door with a big smile . . . this can set the mood for the whole gathering. Remember, they are taking as big a step to show up at your house as you are to host a small group! Don't try to do things exactly like another host; do them in a way that fits you. Admit when you don't have an answer and apologize when you make a mistake. Your group will love you for it and you'll sleep better at night.

- 3. PREPARE FOR YOUR MEETING AHEAD OF TIME.** Review the session and write down your responses to each question. Pay special attention to the Putting It Into Practice exercises that ask group members to do something other than engage in discussion. These exercises will help your group live what the Bible teaches, not just talk about it.
- 4. PRAY FOR YOUR GROUP MEMBERS BY NAME.** Before you begin your session, take a few moments and pray for each member by name. You may want to review the Small Group Prayer and Praise Report at least once a week. Ask God to use your time together to touch the heart of each person in your group. Expect God to lead you to whomever he wants you to encourage or challenge in a special way. If you listen, God will surely lead.
- 5. WHEN YOU ASK A QUESTION, BE PATIENT.** Someone will eventually respond. Sometimes people need a moment or two of silence to think about the question. If silence doesn't bother you, it won't bother anyone else. After someone responds, affirm the response with a simple "thanks" or "great answer." Then ask, "How about somebody else"? or "Would someone who hasn't shared like to add anything"? Be sensitive to new people or reluctant members who aren't ready to say, pray, or do anything. If you give them a safe setting, they will blossom over time. If someone in your group is a wallflower who sits silently through every session, consider talking to them privately and encouraging them to participate. Let them know how important they are to you—that they are loved and appreciated, and that the group would value their input. Remember, still water often runs deep.

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- 6. PROVIDE TRANSITIONS BETWEEN QUESTIONS.** Ask if anyone would like to read the paragraph or Bible passage. Don't call on anyone, but ask for a volunteer, and then be patient until someone begins. Be sure to thank the person who reads aloud.
- 7. BREAK INTO SMALLER GROUPS OCCASIONALLY.** With a greater opportunity to talk in a small circle, people will connect more with the study, apply more quickly what they're learning, and ultimately get more out of their small group experience. A small circle also encourages a quiet person to participate and tends to minimize the effects of a more vocal or dominant member.
- 8. SMALL CIRCLES ARE ALSO HELPFUL DURING PRAYER TIME.** People who are unaccustomed to praying aloud will feel more comfortable trying it with just two or three others. Also, prayer requests won't take as much time, so circles will have more time to actually pray.
- 9. ROTATE FACILITATORS OCCASIONALLY.** You may be perfectly capable of hosting each time, but you will help others grow in their faith and gifts if you give them opportunities to host the group.
- 10. ONE FINAL CHALLENGE (FOR NEW OR FIRST-TIME HOSTS).** Before your first opportunity to lead, look up each of the six passages listed below. Read each one as a devotional exercise to help prepare you with a shepherd's heart. Trust us on this one. If you do this, you will be more than ready for your first meeting.

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Matthew 9:36–38 (NIV) - *When Jesus saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.”*

JOHN: 14-15 (NIV) - *I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me—just as the Father knows me and I know the Father—and I lay down my life for the sheep.*

1 Peter 5:2-4 (NIV) - *Be shepherds of God’s flock that is under your care, serving as overseers— not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away*

Philippians 2:1-5 (NIV)- *Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others. In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: ...*

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Hebrews 10:23-25 (NIV) - *Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.*

1 Thessalonians 2:7-8,11-12 (NIV) - *Instead, we were like young children among you. Just as a nursing mother cares for her children, so we cared for you. Because we loved you so much, we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well. ... For you know that we dealt with each of you as a father deals with his own children, encouraging, comforting and urging you to live lives worthy of God, who calls you into his kingdom and glory.*

ONE FINAL TIP FOR THE HOST:

The study guide material is meant to be your servant, not your master. The point is not to race through the sessions; the point is to take time to let God work in your lives. Nor is it necessary to “go around the circle” before you move on to the next question. Give people the freedom to speak, but don’t insist on it. Your group will enjoy deeper, more open sharing and discussion if people don’t feel pressured to speak up.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How long will this group meet?

This study is seven sessions long. We encourage your group to add an eighth session for celebration. In your final session you may decide to continue on for another study. At that time, you may also want to do some informal evaluation, discuss your Life Group guidelines and decide which study you want to do next.

Who is the Host?

The host is the person who coordinates and facilitates your group meetings. In addition to a host, we encourage you to select one or more group members to lead your group discussions. Several other responsibilities can be rotated, including refreshments, prayer requests, worship, or keeping up with those who miss a meeting. Shared ownership in the group helps everybody grow.

Where do we find new group members?

Recruiting new members can be a challenge for groups, especially new groups with just a few people, or existing groups that lose a few people along the way. We encourage you to use the **Circles of Small Group Connections** diagram on the next page to brainstorm a list of people from your workplace, church, school, neighborhood, family, and so on. Then pray for the people on each member list. Some groups fear that newcomers will interrupt the intimacy that members have built over time. However, groups that welcome newcomers generally gain strength with the infusion of the new blood. Remember, the next person you add just might become a friend for eternity.

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Logistically, groups find different ways to add members. Some groups remain permanently open, while others choose to open periodically, such as at the beginning or end of a study. If your group becomes too large for easy, face-to-face conversations, you can subgroup, forming a second discussion group in another room.

How Do We Handle The Child-Care Needs of the Group?

Child-care needs must be handled very carefully. This is a sensitive issue. We suggest you seek creative solutions as a group. One common solution is to have the adults meet in the living room and share the cost of a sitter (or two) who can be with the kids in another part of the house. Another popular option is to have one home for the kids and a second home (close by) for the adults. If desired, the adults could rotate the responsibility of providing a lesson for the kids. This last option is great with school-age kids and can be a huge blessing to families.

Circles of Small Group Connections

Discover Who You Can Connect with in Community

Use this chart to help carry out on of the values in the group guidelines, to “Welcome Newcomers.”

Family
(immediate or extended)

Church
(church relationships)

Friends
(neighbors, sports, school, etc.)

Fun
(gym, hobbies, hang-outs)

Job
Professional, work arenas)

Follow This Simple Three-Step Process

1. List one or two people in each circle.
2. Prayerfully select one person or couple from your list and tell your group about them.
3. Give them a call and invite them to your next meeting. Over 50% of those invited to a small group say “Yes”!

SMALL GROUP GUIDELINES

It's a good idea for every group to put words to their shared values, expectations, and commitments. Such guidelines will help you avoid unspoken agendas and unmet expectations. We recommend you discuss your guidelines during Session 1 in order to lay the foundation for a healthy group experience (feel free to adapt these principles to the vision and purposes of your group).

We Agree to the Following Values:

Clear Purpose

We agree to grow healthy together as we improve our spiritual lives.

Group Attendance

We agree, that as a courtesy to the group, to make attendance a priority and if running late or unable to attend to call or give notice.

Safe Environment

We agree to create a safe place where people can be heard and feel loved (no quick answers, snap judgments, or simple fixes)

Be Confidential

We agree to keep anything that is shared confidential and within the group. (If a problem arises contact your host or cohost).

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Spiritual Health

We agree to allow group members to speak into our life and to encourage each other to live a healthy, balanced, spiritual life, one that is pleasing to God. (This is called “one anothering”)

Welcome Newcomers

We agree to invite friends who might benefit from this study and warmly welcome newcomers, even after the series has started.

Building Relationships

We agree to get to know the other members of the group and pray for them by name on a regular basis.

Other

We have also discussed and agree on the following items:

Child Care _____

Starting Time _____

Ending Time _____

Take a few minutes to fill out the Small Group Calendar. This will help you to keep track of dates and times, as well as other preparations that may be necessary.

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SMALL GROUP CALENDAR

Date	Lesson	Location	Tour Guide	Snack Optional
	Session 1			
	Session 2			
	Session 3			
	Session 4			
	Session 5			
	Session 6			
	Session 7			

Small Group Prayer and Praise Reports

This is the place where you can write each other's requests for prayer. You can also make a note when God answers a prayer. Pray for each other's requests by name in the small group and during the week. If you are new to group prayer, it's okay to pray using just one sentence:

God, please help _____ to _____

Date	Person	Prayer Request	Praise Report

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Why Say “Yes” to Jesus

Everyone believes in something or someone! The question is whether what you believe in or who you believe in is able to give you a right relationship with God? The Bible tells us that there is **only one person** who can give us the righteousness we need to be fully acceptable to God. Here is how it works.

There are two things God wants you to know. First, **He loves you!** He does so because He created you. Even if you don't love yourself, God loves you! He loves you so much that He created a way for you to be in right relationship with Him. This brings me to the second thing God wants you to know. **He gave you a gift! The gift God gave you is His own son Jesus.** Why do we need this gift? Because **God requires** anyone in a relationship with Him to be 100% righteous all the time. Is that possible for you now? If you are really honest with yourself, you would conclude that it is impossible! Which is precisely why we need a Savior!

Jesus did what we are incapable of doing. He became a human being and lived a sinless life. The Bible says that he was tempted in every way that we are, but he did not give in. He did **not** sin. We fail many times a day but **Jesus never did.** Therefore, He earned the right to act on our behalf to give us the righteousness required to be in a relationship of right standing with God. He did for us what we could not do for ourselves. It's as if Jesus said, “take my freedom as if is yours!” Jesus lived sinless, but was crucified as sinful. He was innocent, but was punished as if he committed the unpardonable sin. After being dead for three days, he came back to life and lives today in heaven. What a great ending to a tragic story!

Based on those two facts, **this is what God invites you to do.** First, **believe that what Jesus did counted for you today!** To “*believe*” means to put your faith in Jesus as the

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only one who can save you from your own sin and inabilities. Where you lack, he completes. When Jesus becomes the object of your faith, then God the Father decides if you are in “right” standing with Him. Your personal righteousness is provided by Jesus. When you decide to believe that, God says you have eternal life. Second, once you believe what Jesus did on your behalf matters now, then **you can decide to place your complete trust in him as your Savior.** Then, eternal life starts the moment of believing and receiving!

What action do you take to accomplish this? The Bible says in Romans 10:9-10, “*that if you confess with your mouth, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.*” --- The action to take is both an internal belief and an external proclamation of an out loud prayer.

If you are ready to say “yes” to Jesus as your Savior, repeat the following prayer out loud (preferably with someone who has already decided to follow Jesus):

Dear Heavenly Father, I’m ready to say “Yes” to Jesus as my Lord and Savior. Forgive me for my self-centered thoughts and actions against you. I choose to believe now that Jesus is my only Savior that can give me a right standing and relationship with God! I desire to follow Jesus with my whole heart from this day forth. Amen.

If you prayed this prayer out loud while alone, then tell someone who is following Jesus as soon as possible. If you are in a small group, ask to share with the group the next time you meet. Ask for ways to grow in your understanding in being a follower of Jesus. Congratulations! Welcome to the Kingdom of God!

