

# *Series 1 materials*

## *Session 1-1*

This process will be most helpful in your spiritual growth if you are honest with yourself and thorough with your responses. There is no need to say what you think the “right” answer is, but rather the most sincere answer. My goal is to walk you through questions that will help you identify your needs and next steps, whether it be personally, spiritually, or professionally. I am not here to judge you, give advice or tell you what to do, but rather to help guide your thinking through questions and study of scripture.

### **Scripture focus**

Paul wrote from prison to the Phillipians: “For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus. For God is my witness, how I long for you all with the affection of Christ Jesus. And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in real knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve the things that are excellent, in order to be sincere and blameless until the day of Christ; having been filled with the fruit of righteousness which comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.”  
Philippians 1:6-11

### **Prayer**

Dear Lord, we ask for your blessing over this meeting today, that You would guide our hearts in obedience to you and open our eyes to the truths in Your Gospel so that we can be who You need us to be here until You return.

### **Application to your life**

- Verse 6: He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus
  - What good work has he begun in you?
  - Do you see it becoming more perfect (more like Jesus) over time?
    - If not, what needs to change?
- Verse 9: Paul prayed that their love would grow in real knowledge and discernment
  - Are there any areas of your life where you are seeking real knowledge and discernment (truth about right and wrong)
    - Where do you seek answers?
    - What are some areas that you know you have already grown in real knowledge and discernment
    - What has been helpful for you?
- Verse 11: having been filled with the fruit of righteousness which comes through Jesus Christ
  - What does it mean to you to be filled with the fruit of righteousness?

### **Deeper reflection**

- Do you feel God's pulling on your heart in any areas of your life?
- What action do you feel that God is leading you to take to grow in your walk with Him?

## *Session 1-2*

Today we're going to focus on some challenging verses and ask that you deeply consider what God's desires may be for your life. There are many passages in the Scripture that bring us peace and comfort, but others like this one that challenge our thinking and urge us to draw nearer to Him in trust and obedience.

### **Scripture focus**

God spoke His Word through the prophet Isaiah: "Seek the Lord where He may be found; call upon Him while He is near. Let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return to the Lord, and He will have compassion on him, and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon. 'For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways,' declares the Lord.

'For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts than your thoughts. For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return there without watering the earth and making it bear and sprout, and furnishing seed to the sower and bread to the eater; so will My word be which goes forth from My mouth; it will not return to Me empty, without accomplishing what I desire, and without succeeding in the matter for which I sent it.

For you will go out with joy and be led forth with peace; the mountains and the hills will break forth into shouts of joy before you, and all the trees of the field will clap their hands. Instead of the thorn bush the cypress will come up, and instead of the nettle the myrtle will come up, and it will be a memorial to the Lord, for an everlasting sign which will not be cut off. Isaiah 55: 6-13

### **Prayer**

Father in heaven, we ask that You open our eyes to Your work in our lives around us. Give us the wisdom to see where You are moving and the courage to join You. We know that Your plans for Your people are good, and we trust You. Lord please search out any unrighteousness in us and help us become more like You over time as we seek You and study Your Word.

## Application to your life

- Verses 6-7: Let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return to the Lord, and He will have compassion on him, and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon
  - Are there ways you notice God's compassion in your life, and how He has abundantly pardoned you?
  - Think of both recent and past instances of God's compassion
- Verse 8-9: For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways, declares the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts than your thoughts.
  - In what ways do you think God's thoughts might be higher than your thoughts?
  - Do you think your thoughts are becoming more like His over time, or less?
- Verse 11: So will My word be which goes forth from My mouth; it will not return to Me empty, without accomplishing what I desire
  - What do you believe the Lord desires in your life right now?
    - Why do you believe this?
- Do you notice God speaking to you?
  - What does He ask of you?
  - Are you willing to do what He calls you to do?

## *Session 1-3*

Due to the fallen nature of mankind, we must be separated from a Holy God. But by His grace and mercy through the sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ we are considered to be blameless in His sight once we acknowledge our sin and that He has taken our punishment. Because of His great love for us, He sacrificed Himself for a fallen people so that we could live in eternity with Him.

### **Scripture focus**

Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, for the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death. For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God did: sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh, so that the requirement of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

For those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace, because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to do so, and those who are in the flesh cannot please God. Romans 8: 1-8

### **Prayer**

Dear Lord, we want to live a life in peace with You. We know that we are sinful by nature and cannot save ourselves. We ask that You give us the grace to set our minds on the Spirit, on the things that are eternal rather than temporary. We thank you that Your great sacrifice has allowed us to live without condemnation, and that we are free from sin and death.

### **Application to your life**

- Verse 2: The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death
  - Are you living victoriously as though you have been set free?
- Verse 4: so that the requirement of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit
  - What does it mean to walk according to the Spirit?
    - Do you find yourself being led by the Spirit?
- Verse 5: Those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit
  - Have you set your mind on things of the Spirit?
    - How can you tell?

### **Deeper reflection**

- If a follower of Christ has her mind on the flesh rather than the Spirit, what impact on her life do you think that may have?

## *Session 1-4*

Our relationship with Christ has made us new. And not only are we made new, but it should change how we look at everyone around us - in light of eternity. Our relationships are an outpouring of our spiritual life. And our relationship with God should completely determine how we intertwine our lives with the lives of those He has placed around us.

### **Scripture focus**

For the love of Christ controls us, having concluded this, that one died for all, therefore all died; and He died for all, so that they who live might no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and rose again on their behalf. Therefore from now on we recognize no one according to the flesh; even though we have known Christ according to the flesh, yet now we know Him in this way no longer. Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.

Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were making an appeal through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. 2 Corinthians 5:14-21

### **Prayer**

Lord, we ask you to open our eyes to things in our lives that don't belong now that we are a new creation. Help us to view others the way You do, and to view ourselves as Your ambassadors, guiding others to reconcile with You. Give us compassion for those who are living outside of Your will and give us the courage to be who You need us to be.

### **Application to your life**

- Verse 14: When He died for us, a part of us died with Him so that we would not live for ourselves but for His purposes.
  - What does it look like to live for yourself versus living for God?
- Verse 16: Therefore from now on we recognize no one according to the flesh; even though we have known Christ according to the flesh
  - How would viewing others in light of eternity change the way you interact with them today?
    - Where in your life are you doing this well?
    - Where could it use your attention?
- Verse 20: As ambassadors for Christ we are in the ministry of reconciliation - the restoration of broken relationships
  - Are there relationships in your life that need reconciliation?
    - What would reconciliation look like?
      - Most importantly - are you reconciled with God?
- Verse 21: He made Him who knew no sin to be sin our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him

### **Deeper reflection**

- How do you help others reconcile with God and with each other?
  - What is your ministry?
- Are you open to what He might call you to?
  - What is the cost of disobedience?
  - Why follow Him?