

HOW ARE YOU... REALLY?

Week 7: The Secret to Wellness

FACILITATOR'S NOTE:

- ✓ Start your group discussion with the "Check-in" question to help your members reflect back on their week and follow up on last week's application challenge.
 - ✓ Review the "Big Idea" to help you gain clarity around the heart of this week's message and focus your group's discussion towards a clear direction.
 - ✓ Read this week's scripture passages together and guide your group through the "Discuss" questions to initiate meaningful dialogue around key concepts or insights from this week's message.
 - ✓ Move your group discussion to a deeper level by leading them through questions in "Apply". Use discernment to customize these application questions to meet the needs & dynamics of your group.
- NOTE:** You do not have to cover all the questions provided in "Apply".
- ✓ Connect with God together as a group through this week's "prayer practice", which can be in the form of a prayer exercise or some guidance on what to pray for in relation to the message or application.

CHECK-IN	How did you practice authenticity this past week? Were you more aware of those moments when you were being inauthentic?
BIG IDEA	<p>Why are there people who seem to have everything, yet are so dissatisfied in life? In contrast, there are those who are going through much trial and turmoil, yet embody so much joy and gratitude. What's their secret to wellness? As Christians, how do we learn to experience lasting joy and contentment in times of blessings and sorrow? As humans, we tend to struggle against the constant angst that we need something 'more', which prevents us from enjoying all that we currently have in the now. Contentment is the joyful art of making the most of what you have. G. K. Chesterton put it this way: "True contentment is a thing as active as agriculture. It is the power of getting out of any situation all that there is in it." The essence, importance, and experience of contentment and fullness of life are rooted in relying on God.</p>
DISCUSS	<p>Read Ecclesiastes 5:18-20 and Proverbs 15:15-17.</p> <p>We will be adopting some questions from a <i>How to Study the Bible</i> online resource to help us to interpret the passage. Supplementary questions follow each of the "big questions" in order to connect them to the sermon message. The beauty of using a set of "big questions" like these is that we can apply them to any Scripture passage. Choose at least one question from each question type.</p> <hr/> <p>1. <i>What does this teach me about God?</i> What does God desire for us based on the passage in Ecclesiastes?</p>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. What does this reveal about my sin (or the human condition)? What does Solomon's warning in Proverbs reveal to us? 3. How does this point to Christ's redemption? Do you tend to rely on your own strength as you navigate through life, or do you rely on the strength of Christ? What's the difference between relying on your own strength vs. Christ's strength? 4. What is the one truth that I need to apply to my life this week? How can I learn to "rejoice" in my lot in life instead of rebelling or resigning?
<p>APPLY How do we respond to God's teaching in meaningful ways? What might God ask of us in mind, spirit, or actions?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Do you struggle with discontentment? Is it rooted in fear, comparison, or despair? 2. Do you have a situation in your life right now that God may be challenging you to be "content" in? 3. How can we actively practice the art of contentment - in other words, maximizing the situation you find yourself in?
<p>PRAYER PRACTICE</p>	<p>Pastor Brian shared three prayers of encouragement during Sunday's sermon to help move us towards contentment and rejoicing. Select the one which resonates most with you and your situation and pray it out loud in faith.</p> <p>Prayer #1: Lord, give me the faith to believe that you are a really good spiritual director. You have ordered things providentially so that I will be brought to maturity.</p> <p>Prayer #2: Lord, give me hope to believe that you're not done with me yet - that with you, there is hope even in the midst of despair.</p> <p>Prayer #3: Lord, would you give me overcoming love so that I am able to show love in whatever situation I find myself in.</p>