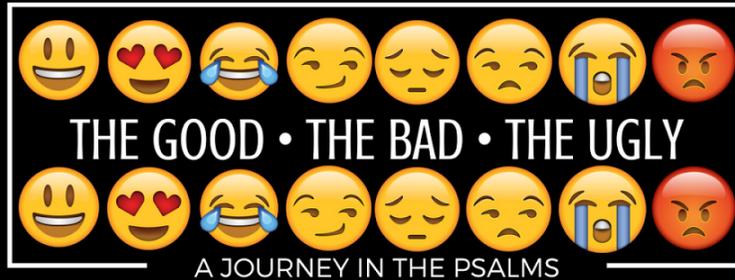


EMOTIONS



HOMEGROUP GUIDE

For the week of April 23rd, 2017



Real Life Ministries Treasure Valley

HOME GROUP GUIDELINES

FOR US TO HAVE HEALTHY AND SAFE CONVERSATIONS

THIS IS A SAFE GROUP

- We will all do our part to create an environment where everyone can be real, open and honest with their struggles and victories

CONFIDENTIALITY IS KEY

- What is said in the group stays in the group

NO CROSSTALK

- Crosstalk is a conversation that leaves others out
- No side conversations
- Listen while others are speaking (if you want to explore more of what someone said, call or talk to them afterwards. This also builds relationship outside of the group time)

NO FIXING OR RESCUING

- We are not here to fix each other, Jesus does that part
- Give encouragement, speak truth, point to Jesus
- Life is a journey, allow people to struggle - grow

CREATE OPPORTUNITY FOR EVERYONE TO SHARE

- Be sensitive about the amount of time you share
- Allow time for others to be a part of the discussion, don't be a first responder

USE "I" VS. "WE" OR "THEM" STATEMENTS

- This is a time for us as individuals to grow
- Work on honesty, transparency, authenticity
- Be committed to resolve conflict Biblically

As humans we will need to extend grace to one another. Conflict is not bad, but an opportunity for growth. We are all being changed to be more like Jesus so conflict and change are part of the journey.

Here are some key scriptures to refer to:

- If someone sins against you. (Matthew 18:15-20)
- Restoring someone in sin. (Galatians 6:1-5)
- Forgive a sinner. (Colossians 3:12-13)
- Reconciling differences. (Matthew 5:23-24)

House Rules (slightly different in each home)

- Honor group start and end times.
- Kid safety guidelines and clean up.

OUR VISION AND MISSION

SHARE THESE EVERY WEEK AT THE START OF YOUR GROUP

VISION: *Reaching the world for Jesus, one person at a time.*

MISSION: *Creating Biblical disciples in relational environments.*

OUR DEFINITIONS

CLARIFY THE MEANING OF “DISCIPLE” AND “RELATIONAL ENVIRONMENT”

DISCIPLE

- A disciple is one who is *learning, being, doing, and making* in relationship with Jesus.
- The foundation for this understanding of discipleship is found in Matthew 4:17-19 ...
- ... *“From that time on Jesus began to preach, ‘Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.’ As Jesus was walking beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon called Peter and his brother Andrew. They were casting a net into the lake, for they were fisherman. ‘Come follow me,’ Jesus said, ‘and I will make you fishers of men.’”*
- This passage leads to four questions that form the foundation of discipleship (learning, being, doing, making).
 - **Learning**: Am I *learning* what it means to be a part of the Kingdom and live out the good news that the Kingdom is near?
 - **Being**: Am I *being* a disciple who lives out of an abiding relationship with Jesus that is built on an identity given from God. Am I *being* (abiding) in God’s love through Jesus so that the Image of God may be restored in me?
 - **Doing**: Am I *doing* the things that God has called me to do? Am I pursuing Jesus, living in obedience to His Word, and giving of my time, talent, and treasure to forward the Kingdom?
 - **Making**: Am I *making* disciples who make disciples?

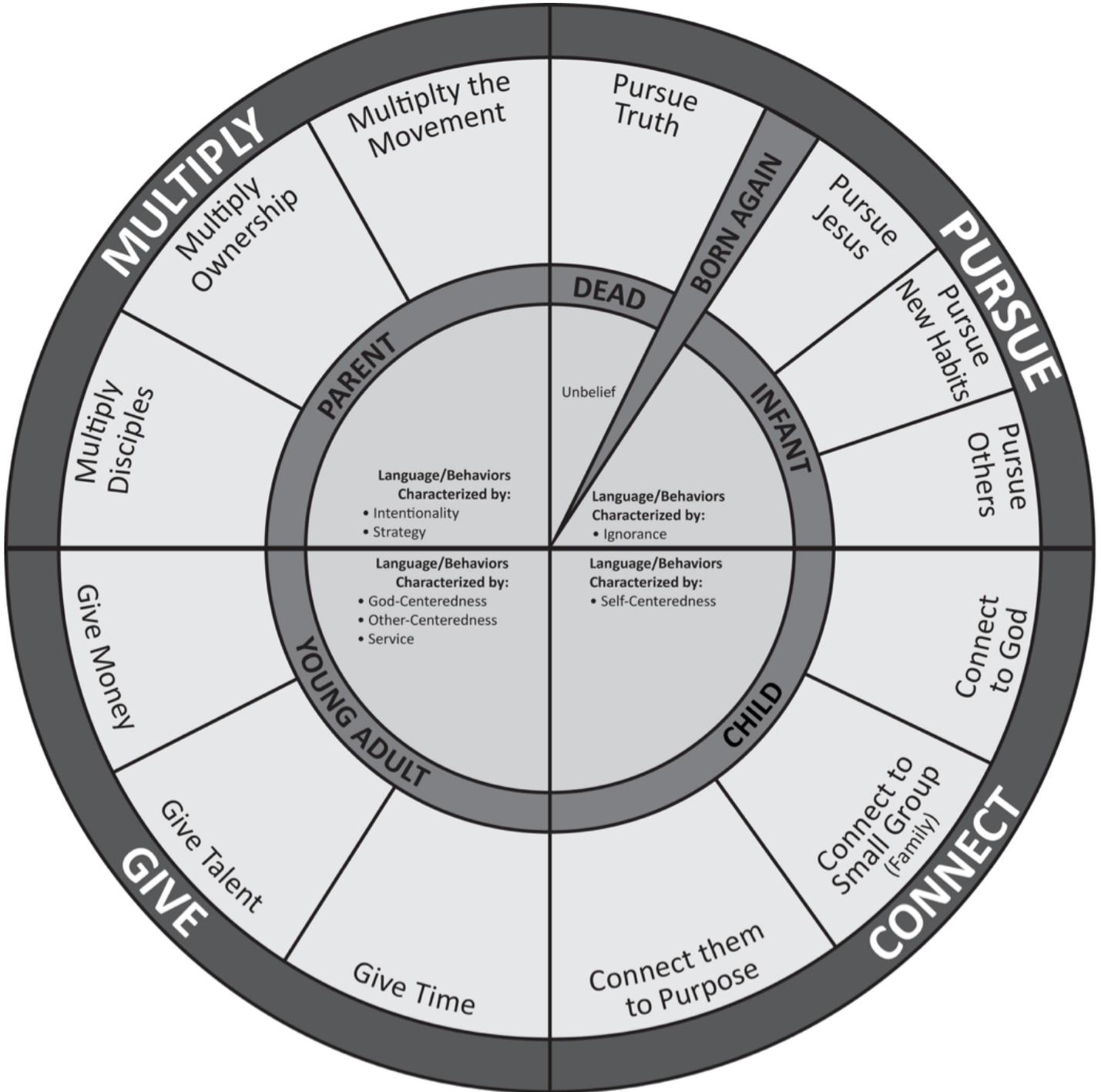
RELATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

- A relational environment is a group of between 3-16 people who are intentionally in relationship to grow as disciples through fellowship, accountability, teaching, prayer, and service.

OUR DISCIPLESHIP PROCESS

MAKE THE “BIG PICTURE OF THE DISCIPLESHIP PROCESS” (SEE BELOW) A FOUNDATIONAL PART OF ASSESSING THE DISCIPLESHIP STAGES OF YOURSELF AND OTHERS. ALSO, USE THIS TO DEVELOP GROWTH GOALS FOR YOURSELF AND YOUR GROUP MEMBERS.

THE BIG PICTURE OF OUR DISCIPLESHIP PROCESS



Week #1: Emotions: The Cry of the Soul

This week we begin a multi-part series on emotions and their importance for our relationship with God and others. This series will rely heavily on the display of human emotion as seen in the Psalms. It is undergirded by four core convictions:

1. Emotions are not amoral - they vocalize the inner working of our souls and are as affected (and tainted) by sin as any other aspect of our personality.
2. The reason for looking inside is not to effect direct change of negative emotions to positive (example: *'stop being angry and start being happy'*). Instead, we should seek to listen to and ponder our feelings in order to be moved to the far deeper issue of what our hearts are doing in regard to God and others.
3. Our guide for this journey will be the Psalms.
4. All emotions - including the darker ones - give us a glimpse of the character of God.

With the above in mind, it will be important to know that we desire for you to go on the journey of wrestling through the thicket of your emotional life. This is not an easy process - but it can be incredibly fruitful. In this first week, we will be taking a deeper look at the process of wrestling through dark emotions as seen in the life/confession of Asaph which is recorded in Psalm 73.

Asaph was a prominent figure in the court of King David. He was a Levite who was in charge of those who ministered before the Ark of the Covenant. As such, he was a prominent musician & singer who led Levites and the people in song and praise (cf. 1 Chronicles 16:4-7). He is also described as a prophet (2 Chronicles 29:30). Despite his prominence and pedigree, Asaph was as susceptible to dark emotions and struggles with God as anyone. Psalm 73 describes his journey of doubting God's goodness in angry unbelief. As Asaph wrestles with his dark emotions and thoughts, he is moved to see the reality and truth of God's ways. In the process of wrestling through his emotional/inner life, he is brought to the place of realizing that God is just and that intimacy with God is sufficient to sustain one's life and bring wholeness and joy.

Group Guide: Elements of Home Group + Discussion Questions

Guidelines: *Read and/or discuss the HG guidelines.*

Vision & Mission: *Share the vision & mission of RLM with your group.*

Icebreaker: *Take an opportunity to get your group going with a question/game.*

(Icebreaker Suggestion: What emotion(s) was prominent in your family of origin?)

This Week's Story: *This week's story is drawn from Psalm 73*

Set the Scene: *Asaph provides us with a great model to examine regarding the process of wrestling with our thoughts & emotions and coming to a deeper understanding of and intimacy with God.*

Read/Tell the Story: *Read the text or "story" it. (Suggested Order Below)*

1. Story or read Psalm 73

Ask about the Story: *Was anything added or left out of the story?*

Discuss the Story: *Discuss with your group*

1. What stood out to you from the sermon or the text(s)? (**Head**)
2. Read 1 Chronicles 16:4-7 and 2 Chronicles 29:30. Does it surprise you that someone of Asaph's stature would wrestle with such thoughts and feelings about God? (**Head**)
3. Do you relate to Asaph's anger and his doubts? If so, take a risk and process it with your group. (**Heart**)
4. Despite the struggles of life and faith, have you come to the place of believing that "it is good to be near God"? Is God your refuge? (**Heart**)
5. Take a moment to think about what you need to begin wrestling through in your emotional/inner life. If you feel comfortable, share with your group what you will be wrestling with this week. (**Hands**)

Summary: *IF WE ARE GOING TO LOVE GOD AND PEOPLE MORE, WE MUST GO THROUGH THE PROCESS OF EXAMINING OUR EMOTIONS. THIS SERIES (EMOTIONS: THE GOOD, THE BAD, AND THE UGLY) WILL HELP US. ASAPH PROVIDES A GREAT EXAMPLE OF WHAT SELF-REFLECTION AND FAITHFUL WRESTLING LOOKS LIKE.*

Prayer: *Have someone from your group record the requests and pray together.*

Preparation for Next Time

Next Week: We continue with *Emotions: The Good, the Bad, the Ugly*.

Preparation: Make time with God to know/pursue Him through His Word, through prayer, and through reflection.

Passages to Read Prior to April 30th, 2017.

Read through Genesis chapters 2 & 3. Ponder how emotion is played out in Adam & Eve's relationship with one another and with God, both before & after the Fall into sin.