

# *How Change Happens*

## **The Nicene Creed**

We believe in One God,  
The Father Almighty,  
Maker of heaven and earth  
And of all things visible and invisible.

We believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only Begotten Son of God,  
Begotten of the Father before all ages,  
God from God, Light from Light, True God from True God,  
Begotten not created,  
Of the same essence as the Father,  
Through whom all things were made.

Who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven  
And was incarnate by the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary  
And became human.  
Who for us too, was crucified under Pontius Pilate,  
Suffered and was buried.  
The third day He rose again  
According to the Scriptures,  
Ascended into heaven,  
And is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
He will come again in glory  
To judge the living and the dead,  
And his Kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and life-giver,  
Who proceeds from the Father and the Son,  
Who together with the Father and Son  
Is worshiped and glorified,  
Who spoke by the prophets.

We believe in one holy, catholic (i.e. universal), and apostolic Church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sin,  
And we look for the resurrection of the dead  
And the life of the age to come.

Amen.

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## Welcome To

# *How Change Happens*

Greetings and welcome!

You are part of a remarkable set of courses for biblically sound pastoral counseling prepared for use by The Urban Ministry Institute (TUMI) and other church groups. I can say this because this course has nearly 50 years of biblical counseling history behind it at The Christian Counseling and Educational Foundation (CCEF). This Chester-TUMI certificate program in the *Foundation and Practice of Pastoral Counseling* includes three courses: *How Change Happens*, *What Change Looks Like*, *Applying the Model to Anger, Depression, Anxiety and Escapism*, and *Helping Change Happen*. The first course is available now. The second and third courses are being prepared in the same format as *How Change Happens*.

CCEF has granted Dr. Rick Horne permission to use the CCEF graduate course content to develop TUMI's undergraduate pastoral counseling courses. For more information about CCEF and the School of Biblical Counseling, please visit [www.ccef.org](http://www.ccef.org). For more information about TUMI International or TUMI-Chester, go to [www.tumi.org](http://www.tumi.org) or [tumichester.org](http://tumichester.org) respectively..

The pastoral counseling certificate courses are soundly biblical, urban church sensitive, well-balanced, and easily adapted for city pastors and church leader schedules. Future courses are planned for a wide range of biblical, pastoral counseling training.

If you are taking this as a TUMI student, you have been recommended by your pastoral staff as one who is a believer in Jesus Christ and a leader in your church. These courses are deeply rooted in biblical truth for both the content and process of pastoral counseling. They assume the sufficiency and inerrancy of Scripture as the "truth that will set you free." (John 8:32).

TUMI students who wish to receive credit for this course must complete all readings, participate in class discussions, and fulfill the Bible memory, response paper, case study, Scripture Case Study, and ministry project assignments. The TUMI mentors and I welcome you and will be in prayer for your growth and benefit from the time we spend together.

Enjoy the Lord and His Word,  
Rick Horne, D.Min.  
TUMI-Chester

## ***How Change Happens***

An Introductory Biblical Counseling Course

For The TUMI Certificate Program

*Foundation & Practice of Pastoral Counseling*

Adapted by Rick Horne from

The CCEF School of Biblical Counseling Course

*The Dynamics of Biblical Change*

By David Powlison

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And Rick Horne

### **Two ways to take this course: Audit and Credit**

#### **Audit:**

Auditing is definitely less work. It allows students to get the gist of the course but not the depth that would come with fulfilling all the background and undergirding work. Auditing may be wise because of work, church, or family demands. Students who audit this course may take the other certificate courses, as well, but only as auditors, unless the student makes prior arrangements with the mentor.

#### **Requirements for Auditors:**

1. Meet the attendance requirements just as credit students do.
2. Do the Bible memory work and pass the memory quizzes with at least half-credit value (i.e. no more than twice the number of mistakes as there are the number of verses memorized).
3. Complete all three of the two-page vignettes as described for credit students. Auditors *do not* have to take the content quizzes or final exam or produce response papers from the readings. They also *do not* have to complete a Scripture Case Study or the Ministry Project and Ministry Project Report.
4. Students who do not meet these Audit requirements, may continue to attend, but do not receive audit value which can affect later course opportunities.

**Credit:**

**Requirements for Credit:**

1. Meet the attendance requirements.
2. Complete Bible memory and course content quizzes and final exam.
3. Complete the Response papers for readings, one-page responses to three of the Questions For Reflection in Lessons 1-7, the three two-page vignettes, the Scripture Case Study, a Ministry Project, and the two-page Ministry Project report.

Specific details about your course meeting schedule, dates and descriptions of assignments due, and other course details will be given out in the first class in a Syllabus Addendum. The *Mentor Manual* has these details in a reproducible form to be handed out.

Enjoy the Lord through this course. Be in prayer for yourself own, your fellow students, and your mentor, throughout the course.

**Suggested Assignment Schedule**

**Week Due**

**Assignment**

RP=Response Paper ;

MV=Memory Verses

Due in Week #1	<b>-Pre-course assignment: Shana Case Study<sup>1</sup></b>
Due in Week #2	-How People Change, Response Paper (HPC) (RP) #1 Foreword & Chap.1, 2, & 3 Responses to three Reflections Questions in Lesson 1
Due in Week #3	-MV #1 (1 Cor. 10:31; Rom. 8:28-29; 2 Tim. 3:16-17) -HPC, RP #23 Chap. 4-6 <b>-In-Class Workbook Quiz #1 on Syllabus &amp; Lessons 1&amp;2</b> Responses to three Reflections Questions in Lesson 2

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<sup>1</sup> The Shana Case Study is an extra-credit assignment and is in the Appendices. Ponder the following questions: How do you understand and explain Shana? What is her problem? What would you aim for in seeking to help her? Put your initial thoughts about her into a concise paper. Your Instructor is not looking for the "right answer" but for how you instinctively tend to approach people. Shana is a real person. Life is messy and not simple. What strikes you? There are thousands of facts. What would you select to begin to help Shana? **Limit this to a maximum of two pages.** We will use this case study again in more detail in Lesson 5. Use the Life-Facts Case Study Chart in the Appendices in preparation for that class.

Due in Week #4	-HPC, RP#35 Chap. 7-8 -Vignette #1 -Use Life -Facts Chart for Aaron Case Study <sup>2</sup> Responses to three Reflections Questions in Lesson 3
Due in Week #5	-Use Life -Facts Chart for the Shana Case Study -MV #2 (Jer. 17:9; Mark. 7:21,22; Rom. 1:16; Phil. 1:6) <b>-In-Class Workbook Quiz #2</b> Lessons 3&4 Responses to three Reflections Questions in Lesson 4
Due in Week #6	-HPC, RP #46 Chap. 9-10 -Vignette #2 Responses to three Reflections Questions in Lesson 5
Due in Week #7	-MV #3 (1 Cor. 10:13; Gal. 2:20; 1 John. 1:8-10) <b>-In-Class Workbook Quiz #3</b> Lessons 5&6 -HPC, RP#58 Chap. 11-12 Responses to three Reflections Questions in Lesson 6
Due in Week #8	-HPC, RP #69 Chap. 13-14 Responses to three Reflections Questions in Lesson 7 -Vignette #3
Due in two weeks after Week #8:	-Scripture Case Study <sup>2</sup> -Final Exam Distributed -Ministry Project <sup>2</sup>

### Grading Values:

- 3 Take-Home Verse Quizzes @ 10 points each
- 3 In-Class Workbook Content Quizzes (Multiple-Choice/Fill-in-the-Blank) @ 10 points each
- 6 Response Papers @ 5 points each
- 21 Responses to "Questions for further thought) @3 points each
- 3 Vignettes @ 14 points each
- 1 Ministry Project @ 30 points
- 1 Scripture Case Study @ 30 points
- 2 (Shana and Aaron) Case Studies @5 points each (Extra Credit)
- Exam @ 30 points
- Attendance and participation @ 15 points (-5 for each absence)
- Total: 300 Points Maximum** (Additional extra credit options are also available.)

<sup>2</sup> The Aaron Case Study is also extra credit and is in the Appendices. Use the Life-Facts Case Study Chart in the Appendices to prepare for our use of it in Lesson 4.

### Grading Scale--Total 300+ points= A+

288-299= A	234-239= C+
270-287= A-	222-233= C
264-269= B+	210-221= C-
252-263= B	195-209= D
240-251= B-	<195= F

### Absence & Lateness Policy

Absence and lateness will affect the attendance and participation value you earn. **Class discussions are a significant part of this course.** Absences and lateness limit one's benefit from the discussion value of a class. Students may miss two classes. **Three or more absences**, however, for any reason, will make one **ineligible for course credit.** (Exception: Listening to the recording **of all missed classes can allow a third absence** and allow a student to earn credit or audit value for the course.) **After a third absence**, one may still come to class and get the benefit of it, **but may not receive course credit. 5 points are deducted from your grade for each absence—up to three.**

# **How Change Happens**

## **STUDENT WORKBOOK**

The Introductory Biblical Counseling Course

For The TUMI Certificate In

*The Foundation of Pastoral Counseling*

Adapted by Rick Horne from

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### **Lesson #1**

#### **The Biblical Goal Of All Change**

##### Objectives

Students will:

1. Explain how God's purpose is known in so far as He reveals it.
2. Show by Scripture that God's purpose is to glorify Himself in all His works of creation and providence.
3. Contrast the rightness of God's purpose to glorify Himself with man's self-exultation and pride.
4. Contrast God's purposes to the purposes of secularism, secular psychology and sociology, and existential nihilism or pragmatic survival struggles common to the urban culture.
5. Be able to connect an accurate picture of life (in contrast to fantasy and wishful thinking views) with truth.
6. Observe biblical and practical illustrations of the brokenness of life.



7. Note how God sees brokenness and how He intervenes to link life with biblical truth in the process of progressive sanctification.
8. Understand that only God's truth accurately connects with life.
9. Show how God's self-revelation in Word and person is tailored to real people living in the real world—broken as both are.
10. Unpack the words *redemption* and *salvation* to display their wide, new-creation fullness.
11. Explain how God's wisdom goes beyond knowledge to understanding and applying that understanding to all life situations.
12. Support the concept of the sufficiency of Scripture for making needed changes.
13. Show how "not leaning" on our understanding *does not mean* that we do not "use" our understanding. Other knowledge may be useful to the counselor, in so far as it parallels or echoes God's wisdom. All truth is God's truth, but it takes principles and precepts of God's truth, as revealed in Scripture, to determine if ideas are truthful.

(Note: minute and second notations throughout the outline correspond to the approximate Mentor DVD video version locations of related content for this lesson.)

## PART 1 OF LESSON 1

### I. (9:56) God's purpose

A. What is the purpose of God? This question seems like a bold, almost irreverent, question! Who are we to say what God's purpose is?

1. It is mysterious:

a. "My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the LORD" (Isa 55:8).

b. "Who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counselor?" (Rom 11:34)

2. But features of His purpose are knowable because He has revealed them:

a. (10:58) In the context of God's mission for His servant (Israel, the Messiah, the Messiah's people), the Lord speaks through Isaiah (in Isa 42:6-8) saying,

"I am the LORD; I have called you in righteousness; I will take you by the hand and keep you; I will give you as a covenant for the people, *a light for the nations*, to open the eyes that are blind, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, from the prison those who sit in darkness."

b. Why does the LORD say He has called Israel to be a "light for the nations"?

"I am the LORD; that is my name; my glory I give to no other, nor my praise to carved idols." (Isa. 42:8)

3. (11:47) In Isaiah 45:5–7 God planned to use the pagan Persian king, Cyrus, to restore Israel to the promised land. A pagan king!? Why?

"I am the LORD, and there is no other, besides me there is no God; I equip you, though you do not know me, **that people may know**, from the rising of the sun and from the west, that there is none besides me; I am the LORD, and there is no other. I form light and create darkness, I make well-being and create calamity, I am the LORD, who does all these things."

4. (12:25) In Romans 11:33–36, Paul concludes his remarkable teaching about God’s sovereign plan of redemption that has the whole world in its focus—not just Israel. There are mysteries, features of which Paul doesn’t seem to know how to unravel. But he does know *why* God has decreed what He has:

“Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways! For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counselor? Or who has given a gift to him that he might be repaid? For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen.”

5. (13:18) In 1 Corinthians 10:31, Paul explains that for the Christian, even the mundane, daily routine things like eating and drinking, or whatever he does, is to be done for God’s glory.

“So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.”

God clearly reveals His purpose to be to advance His glory!

- B. (13:45) Two more things about His purpose (and that also relate to our purpose in this course):

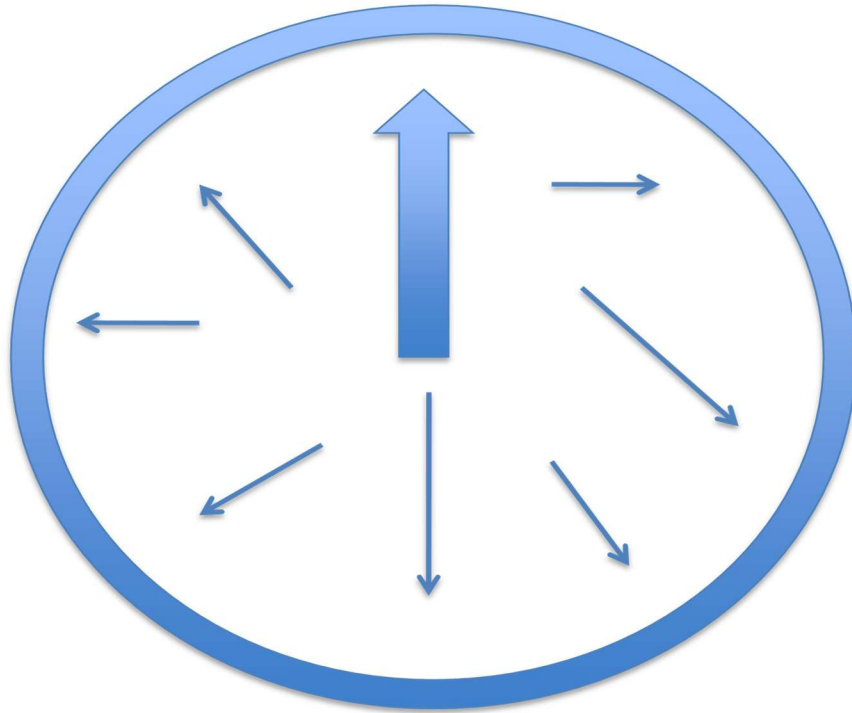
1. His purpose to glorify Himself is different from the pride that He forbids us to have.

- a. Pride says, “I’m all that and you are less than that or nothing at all!” But God is “all that!”

- b. Any statement that reflects that God is all glorious fits with reality. Any of my prideful statements are out of sync with reality. God is worthy of all worship, attention, and praise. Any attention we try to draw to ourselves is in competition with Him and His rightful glory and singular deity.

- c. We aim at or compete with God’s goal in all our choices. (See the diagram below.) We make all kinds of decisions throughout our lives. The arrows represent these. God’s decree for us is to glorify Him in all our decisions, thoughts, and actions. “You shall love the Lord with all your... You shall have no other gods before me...” Any action, thought, or choice we make that deviates from God’s purpose is in competition with Him. Close doesn’t count. It’s in competition with Him.

## God's Glory



Every other goal for living competes with God's glory—His purpose for all that exists.

d. (15:03) Competing with God's purpose is crazy! "Woe to him who strives with him who formed him, a pot among earthen pots! Does the clay say to him who forms it, 'What are you making?' or 'Your work has no handles.'" (Isa 45:9). Paul cites this passage in Romans and adds, "Who are you, O man, to answer back to God?" (Rom 9:20a).

e. Competing with God's purpose is harmful. When we draw attention to ourselves, consider who benefits and who is defrauded or hurt by our emphasis on ourselves. We benefit *only* at another's expense.

f. If we adopt His purpose as our own, this will send shockwaves throughout all aspects of our lives. This motive will affect

- i. Our approach to unbelievers
- ii. Our approach to evangelism
- iii. Our experience of suffering

- iv. Our reaction to our sins and failures
  - v. Our motives for change
  - vi. Our priorities
2. (18:48) There are competing goals from our culture and our hearts.
- a. Pursuing God’s purpose differs from *secularism*, which wants us to live (and die) as though God does not exist or is irrelevant.
  - b. Pursuing God’s glory affects everything because every act, thought, decision is theological (Ps 14:1 “The fool says in his heart...”). Every choice is related to our view of God—even eating and drinking (1 Cor 10:31).
  - c. Pursuing God’s purpose differs from secular *psychology or sociology*, which wants us to live and be in relationships as though our own resources (mental, emotional, and even spiritual ones) are sufficient for what we “need.”
  - d. Pursuing God’s purpose also differs from living with a simple *survival* mentality so visible in the hopelessness and self-destructiveness in urban neighborhoods.

### **Questions for Reflection on Part 1**

1. Are there any kind of circumstances that exist in which God will NOT get glory? Will my sin and weaknesses bring dishonor to Christ? Isn’t that what Peter, Paul, and Isaiah warn about? (1 Peter 2:12; Rom 2:24; Isa 52:5) How can such conditions be used by God to bring Himself glory?
2. Is it really possible to live like 1 Corinthians 10:31 urges—doing “all to the glory of God”?
3. What do “secularism” and “survivalism” have in common?

## (23:06) PART 2 OF LESSON 1

The purpose of God leads to our purpose in this course:

- II. The central point of the course is not abstractly intellectual, philosophical or theoretical. And it's not merely mechanical, as if we can master a strategy for counseling and solving problems.



(23:40) Rather it is to put a rivet, a strong connection, between the “T” (truth) of the living God (who He is and what He says) and the “L” (life) that we have the privilege of living.

- A. (25:00) First, our “L” (life) needs to be connected to “T” (truth)—Why?

Six things about connecting our lives with truth!

1. Life is broken. Something is wrong and needs to be made right. There are injustices, disappointments, betrayals, oppressions, self-destructive acts. Things are broken in life, and we all have a sense of that.
  - a. The book of Ecclesiastes illustrates the felt pointlessness and brokenness of life. It uses the word *meaningless* (see Eccl 1:2) 37 times; 28 times the writer connects that meaninglessness with living “under the sun”—living life without a vertical connection to God; 9 times He calls such living “striving after the wind” (see Eccl 1:14).

- b. The Psalms are also crowded with anxieties, fears, threats, personal failures, betrayals, and confusion about the way life is going. “Refuge” is a theme in more than 100 of the Psalms. 15 times in the Psalms the Psalmists ask, “How long?” They’re saying, “Lord, this can’t last, please. Something is wrong and needs to be made right.”
  - c. Consider those who came to Jesus for healing. Everyone who came to Him knew things were not as they should be.
  - d. A sense of God’s moral law is written on the hearts of all people as well. This gives people a sense of “oughtness” about the way people should live—different from the way we all do live (Rom 2:15).
  - e. Even believers struggle with things not being as we know they should be and want them to be. Paul declared, “For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing” (Rom 7:19). Also, the creation itself and “we ourselves groan” (Rom 8:19– 25).
2. (27:55) We typically react to the brokenness of life, or our perception of it, in ways that make the problem worse. “There is a way...seems right...” but its “...end is the way to death” (Prov 14:12).
  3. (29:11) We often react (due to common grace) because we want to do something about the brokenness. Even unbelievers usually *want* to do something that seems right and helpful.

Proverbs 14:12 affirms that people do try to do something that “seems right,” but it ends in one form or another of loss (“the way to death”).

4. (30:34) God sees the brokenness clearly. The Bible’s core has to do with making right what is wrong. This is the “salvation” (i.e., big, whole-life deliverance) that Paul talks about in Romans 1:16.
  - a. No one sees what’s wrong more clearly than the one before whose eyes we live. “And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account” (Heb 4:13).
  - b. No one makes more of a difference than God in Christ. He makes us “new creations” (2 Cor 5:17).

5. (33:36) A fifth factor in linking life to truth is that the actual process of linking the “L” to “T” is usually slow. This is called “progressive sanctification.” Scripture teaches several things about the process:
- a. (33:45) Progressive sanctification contrasts with ideas that a special leap of faith, experience, or encounter with God will lift one to a state of perfection in this life. Note Paul’s experience and his teaching:
    - Philippians 3:12,13: “Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect, but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.”
    - 2 Corinthians 3:18: “And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.”
    - 2 Corinthians 5:2-4: “For in this tent we groan, longing to put on our heavenly dwelling, if indeed by putting it on we may not be found naked. For while we are still in this tent, we groan, being burdened—not that we would be unclothed, but that we would be further clothed, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life.”
    - Philippians 1:6: “And I am sure of this, that He who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.”
  - b. (35:30) Our progress is always full of contradictions. The unfolding process is invariably messy. “So I find it to be a law that when I want to do right, evil lies close at hand.” (Rom 7:21). “Let anyone who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall” (1 Cor 10:12).
  - c. (36:00) We need patience with ourselves and with others and perseverance in our pursuit of Christ-likeness. Progress may be slow. “Beloved, we are God’s children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when He appears we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him as he is. And everyone who thus hopes in Him purifies himself as He is pure” (1 John 3:2-3).
  - d. (36:46) Consider the metaphor of the Christian life as a yo-yo held in the hand of a man walking up a flight of stairs.



6. (37:38) What is broken is the theater for His glory in real-time and space in real life. God intervenes. There is a real Redeemer. This is the gospel! Our brokenness is the occasion for God's glory to be displayed. This has been God's pattern throughout biblical history, especially vivid in the resurrection of Christ, where God brought life out of death.
- a. Personally and interpersonally, we become different—by grace. We are new creations (2 Cor 5:17).
  - b. God's view of our sanctification is realistic and optimistic. There is not perfection on this side of heaven until we see the Lord. "Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him..." (1 John 3:2).
  - c. In the meantime, He is making us more and more like his Son (Rom 8:29; James 1:4). "And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image *from one degree of glory to another*. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit" (2 Cor 3:18). What we look at transforms us. What we want to do is rivet the heart attention of people, whom we want to help, on Jesus. Look at Him. You'll be transformed "from one degree of glory to another."

### **Questions for Reflection on Part 2**

1. What is the biggest hindrance you've observed to linking the truth to life in your life in the city? In your church life? In your own personal and family life?
2. What remedies to brokenness, loss, hurt, etc. have you seen that seem to make things worse instead of better?
3. Why is there such a temptation to look for "quick fixes" for hurts we face? What do you see as a solution to these band-aid approaches?
4. We all experience loss and brokenness. Give an example of how you've seen God use brokenness as "the theater for his glory."

## **(40:26) PART 3 OF LESSON 1**

### **B. Connecting truth to life**

1. God's Word answers the questions every approach to change asks. We'll either hear God's voice or another's voice as we listen for answers. Every helping model touches upon these underlying questions—Christian or non-Christian:
  - a. (41:06) What are you facing? What things affect you? What is the meaning of your hardships? What's coming at you? The Bible never lifts us out of the real world. It gives us a lens to see clearly. Christians don't have to pretend that things don't hurt.
  - b. Where do my reactions come from? What do my reactions have to do with what's going on? What goes wrong in my reactions and efforts to live in light of what I'm facing? Why do I respond the ways I do? The Bible diagnoses where my behavior comes from.
  - c. What rules me? How free am I or how controlled am I? Why do I act, think, feel, react, remember, talk, fantasize, choose... the way I do? What motivates me? The Bible clarifies our motivations. It zeros in on our "wants," and "desires" that emerge from our heart.
  - d. What makes a difference? What truly makes wrongs right? Who can help you? Does what you do make things better or worse? The Bible leads to solid change, not quick fixes. It doesn't put a band-aid on deep hurts. It is wise counsel.
  - e. How do you change? How can you change at the deepest levels? What is the process of change like? Is there any point to it? The Bible gets under the surface for lifelong change.
  - f. Is there someone you can look to as a mentor? A voice to guide you? To change you? Someone whose counsel won't be found out to be harmful? The Bible gives a model, a person, to focus upon.
  - g. How should you now live? Where does the power to live differently come from? The Bible shows where our power for living comes from, how to access it, how to live differently with that power.

- h. How can you help others? How will you become a wise person? What makes counseling wise? The Bible gives you ways to helpfully love others.
  - i. (43:39) Every counselor, every theory, and every method assumes or states answers to these common questions.
    - Wrong answers (or half-truths presented as the whole truth) lead both counselor and counseled in the wrong direction. “There is a way...”(Prov 14:12).
    - Wise counsel thinks out and lives out the truth that answers each of these questions. “If you are wise your wisdom will reward you; if you are a mocker, you alone will suffer” (Prov 9:12; See also Prov 3:13–18).
2. (44:53) God’s Word (written and the living Lord Jesus) is the agent the Spirit uses to change people—in the details of life, not just in generalities and abstractions.
- a. God’s revelation to us is to change us—not leave us the same at any level. “Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth” (John 17:17).
  - b. *Redemption* and *salvation* are common biblical words for righting what’s wrong. “I am not ashamed of the Gospel...power of God for salvation to everyone who believes...” (Rom 1:16). The Savior says, “I am making all things new” (Rev 21:5). It’s the Gospel that brings about this kind of change. The Gospel is not just about “getting saved.”
  - c. The wisdom we hope to learn involves:
    - Replacing foolishness and ignorance with wisdom and understanding, “But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere.” (James 3:17).
    - Replacing darkness and perversity with the “fruit of light” (Eph 5:9) and “fruit of the Spirit” (Gal 5:22).
    - Changing accursed people with the “blessed” and righteous ones (Matt 5:3–10; Ps 34:1,2).
    - Replacing self-centered people with those who “love...from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith” (1 Tim 1:5); who practice “faith working through love” (Gal 5:6).

3. **(46:55)** God’s Word is sufficient for making needed changes.

a. Psalm 1:1–3

Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked,  
nor stands in the way of sinners,  
nor sits in the seat of scoffers;  
but his delight is in the law of the LORD,  
and on his law he meditates day and night.  
He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its  
season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers.

This is knowledge of God—not just about him! It’s meditation on his  
Word that brings about this fruitfulness.

b. Proverbs 1:7; 9:10

1:7: “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise  
wisdom and instruction.”

9:10: “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and the  
knowledge of the Holy One is insight.”

See how the “fear of the Lord” is connected to God’s written Word in  
Psalm 19:7–11.

c. “Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth” (John 17:17).

d. 2 Timothy 3:16–17 affirms that God’s Word has a remarkable equipping  
function for Christian workers: He’s given us His word so “...that the  
man of God,” the pastor-teacher, the shepherd, the worker in Christ’s  
church, “may be competent, equipped for every good work.” Consider  
the kinds of people and the kinds of troubles Timothy would be  
equipped to handle with the Word in the beginning of the chapter. They  
are:

- lovers of self
- lovers of money
- proud...arrogant
- abusive
- disobedient to parents
- ungrateful
- unholy..heartless
- unappeasable
- slanderous
- without self control - addictions

- brutal - with their anger
  - not loving good
  - treacherous
  - reckless/thoughtless
  - swollen with conceit
  - lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God
  - having the appearance of godliness but denying its power
- e. “All things that pertain to life and godliness” is through the knowledge of Christ (2 Peter 1:3–4).
- f. In relation to our bondage to sin and our brokenness, Jesus said, “If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” (John 8:31–32).
4. **(50:30)** The danger of mixing God’s redemptive, gospel message with anything else is vividly taught and illustrated:
- 1 Corinthians 1:17
 

“For Christ did not send me to baptize but to preach the gospel, and not with words of eloquent wisdom, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power.”
- Other warnings in the New Testament echo the same concern:
- Paul said of anyone who preaches another gospel, “let him be accursed.” Later Paul said to not listen to any such falsehood that would make them as though they were “bewitched” (Gal 1:6–9; 3:1-3).
  - Such messengers or counselors “delude you with plausible arguments”(Col 2:4).
  - “I am afraid that as the serpent deceived Eve by his cunning, your thoughts will be led astray from a sincere and pure devotion to Christ. For if someone comes and proclaims another Jesus...or if you receive a different Spirit...or if you accept a different gospel...” (2 Cor 11:3–4).
  - “Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation-if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good” (1 Peter 2:2–3).
5. (52:06) Knowledge that comes from non-Christian sources may be useful, in so far as it parallels or echoes God’s wisdom, but it must *not* be leaned upon.

Some unbelievers have written some very helpful descriptive accounts of how sin and life's brokenness affects people. But the believer knows that we cannot take their solutions that don't bring "the fear of the Lord" and a relationship to Christ into the discussion. Likewise, their explanations that don't take the heart into account will miss God's clear diagnosis.

- Proverbs 1:7; 9:10; "...the beginning..." meaning the principal part, starting point, for an on-course trajectory.

- Proverbs 3:5-7

"Trust in the LORD with all your heart,  
and do not lean on your own understanding.  
In all your ways acknowledge him,  
and he will make straight your paths.  
Be not wise in your own eyes;  
fear the LORD, and turn away from evil."

- John 3:19-21, 31

"He who comes from above is above all. He who is of the earth belongs to the earth and speaks in an earthly way. He who comes from heaven is above all." God has a perspective and view that we must bring to the view of our counselees—and ourselves, if we're to help them see biblical change occur. The world doesn't lead with that perspective at all.

### **Questions for Reflection on Part 3**

1. Every approach to change asks common questions. Which of these common questions stands out to you the most? Why do you think that is so?
2. What question(s) do you tend to hear most from others that reveal their desire to see change happen?
3. What makes biblical answers to these questions so important? Why do so many people, even in the church, look in other places for their answers?
4. How important is it to work hard at making sure people see a relationship with Jesus and not just doing different stuff as the key to change?

### **Conclusion:**

In this lesson we have focused on God's purpose to glorify Himself through broken people in a broken world by redeeming them and enabling them to connect Life with God's Truth. His truth is the sufficient resource for the changes He wants to make in us.

**In our next lesson we will:**

1. Identify five features of the process that God uses to change us.
2. See why we can have confidence that we and our counselees will finally arrive at the destination to which God is taking us.
3. Introduce the concept of mental helping models or paradigms that function like road maps that will help us make sense of the brokenness we face in our life and others' lives and how to move toward wholeness.

## **Lesson 2**

### **What Does Biblical Change Look Like?**

#### Objectives

Students will:

1. Explain that progressive sanctification aims to fix what is wrong with us and to transform us into the true humanity, God's "new creation."
2. Describe five features of this process as one that is slow now, includes ups and downs, has a certain outcome of completion, revolves around a relationship with Christ, and is produced through faith in His Word by the Spirit.
3. Understand that the backdrop for the course is the problem of evil—both evil inside of us and evil outside of us, in our world. Both affect us in every dimension of our living.
4. Notice where we all are in relation to God's redemptive final destination for us, the significance of the direction we are moving, and the hope we have of getting there.
5. Understand the concept of paradigms/models/road maps as mental pictures that we all live with to explain how life makes sense to us.
6. Describe the ways our natural reality maps (paradigms) are distorted by sin and the critical role God's Word plays in interpreting life accurately.
7. Contrast the purposes and limitations of models.



(Note: minute and second notations, throughout the outline, correspond to approximate DVD video locations of related Mentor Manual content for this lesson.)

## **PART 1 OF LESSON 2**

I. (1:22) God uses a process called sanctification to bring about change in His people.

A. In general, God changes (sanctifies) us by doing two things:

(1.) He gets rid of what is wrong in us. He makes right what sin has twisted (Rom 1:16).

(2.) He transforms or recreates people and makes them agents of His Kingdom (2 Cor. 5:17).

B. This change, more specifically, His fixing and transforming us, is called “sanctification.” The word *sanctification* means: “to be holy,” “to be separated or set apart for a particular purpose” (from Latin “sanctus,” Greek “hagios,” Hebrew “quodosh”).

C. For a Christian, sanctification is to be set apart to think, will, and live with God’s unique character.

1. This is illustrated well in Numbers 20:10ff.

“And the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, ‘Because you did not believe in me, to uphold me as holy in the eyes of the people of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this assembly into the land that I have given them’” (Num 20:12). Moses’s actions indicated that there are times when he thought God’s Word does not matter. How I feel (if I’m angry, for example) may trump God’s counsel. But God is holy, separate, unique, the only God to be listened to. Sanctification has to do with that kind of separateness—without compromise. This is what He’s begun in us at conversion (Phil 1:6). Our emotions or difficult situations don’t excuse any of our carelessness about doing His will as revealed in His Word.

2. David said in Psalm 138:2b “You have exalted above all things your name and your word.”

3. Paul asserted, “This is the will of God, your sanctification” (1 Thess 4:3).

4. Peter, echoing this theme, quoted Leviticus 11:44 and applied God’s will in this matter: “As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, since it is written, ‘You shall be holy, for I am holy’” (1 Peter 1:14-16,15).

D. (6:05) How does God sanctify His people? What does the process look like?

Five things about the process of sanctification:

1. The process of sanctification is gradual and slow. It takes place over time.

- In Philippians 2:12–15, Paul says: “Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling”
- There’s a process to this matter of change. *Work out what God has worked into you! You are in the process of living with Christ. Grow in him—*

...for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure. Do all things without grumbling or questioning, that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world. (Phil 2:132–15).

- Even more plainly, Paul describes his personal pilgrimage of growth.

Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect, but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. Let those of us who are mature think this way, and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal that also to you. Only let us hold true to what we have attained. (Phil 3:12–16)

- See also 2 Corinthians 3:18, 7:1 and Romans 7:14–24.

2. (8:21) The process of sanctification includes ups and downs.

- Consider the metaphor for Christian growth of a woman with a yo-yo in her hand as she is walking up a flight of stairs. The yo-yo is constantly going up and down, but because the woman is going up- stairs, it is also gaining in elevation. There will be ups and downs throughout life, but there is the promise of growth for believers as they continue to live by faith.
- “And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image, from one degree of glory to another.” (2 Cor 3:18).

3. (9:25) The process of sanctification is certain.

- We shall be like Him when we see Him:

Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when He appears we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him as He is. And everyone who thus hopes in Him purifies himself as He is pure. (1 John 3:2–3).

- Philippians 1:6: “He who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.” (Phil 1:6)
- See also Romans 6:6–9, 8:10–11.

4. (10:13) The process of sanctification is about a relationship with a person.

- Romans 8:29: “For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His son.” (Rom 8:29).
- Philippians 1:21: “To live is Christ, and to die is gain.” (Phil 1:21).
- Galatians 2:20: “I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me, and the life I now live in the flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.” (Gal 2:20).
- In John 15:1–5: Notice the words of intimacy, “abide in me” (remain, continue, endure, stay in me). These words describe a living faith in Christ.

I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser... Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. (John 15:1-5)

- (12:09) A clear implication: Method is NOT the issue. There is no “secret” formula, set of steps, script, or special experience to overall transformation. *Relationship* is the issue—not a method or strategy.
- At the same time, there are common elements involved in the change process that God does spell out and illustrate.

- We will look at the common elements involved in the change process and the way in which it typically occurs. The next two lessons will present ways to think about change with these common elements in mind.
- The approaches we present for the process of sanctification, one a list of logical questions and one a series of pictures, are memory aids to help us keep the elements of change in mind, to help us know where we are in the helping process, and to help us think with order about the many details of a friend's life. But this process is not a series of steps to follow in some mechanical way. There isn't one secret method, or key for change. Jesus is the best example of this. He helped innumerable people—and no two were helped the same way. All were pointed in the same direction, toward Him, and had to meet the same heart requirements of repentance and trust/faith.

5. (16:01) The process of sanctification is by faith in Christ—faith that comes through His Word—and the Spirit produces the change.

- “Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth.” (John 17:17).
- “So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through from the word of Christ” (Rom 10:17)..”
- “...transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.” (2 Cor 3:18b).

E. (16:53) Change is progressive and gradual because of the problem and presence of evil.

1. Evil is around us.

- “God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear though the earth gives way, though the mountains be moved into the heart of the sea, though its waters roar and foam, though the mountains tremble at its swelling. *Selah.*” Psalm 46:1–3
- See also Ecclesiastes 9:3.

2. Evil is within us.

- “The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?” (Jer 17:9).

- “For from within, out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, coveting, wickedness, deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, foolishness” (Mark 7:21–22).
- Paul acknowledged this when he confessed, “When I want to do right, evil lies close at hand” (Rom 7:21).
- John also gave us the encouragement that the Savior also knows that our lives are marked with ongoing sin while in this life. In 1 John 1:8, John says: “If we say we have no sin (present tense), we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.” And in verse 10: “If we say we have not sinned (past tense), we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.”
- See also James 1:12–15.

### **Questions For Reflection on Part 1**

1. Jesus said that “unless your righteousness exceeds that of the Scribes and Pharisees, you cannot will never enter the kingdom of heaven.” (Matt 5:20) The Scribes and Pharisees were the most strict and religious people of the day. Does sanctification have to do with strictness? With severely high levels of self-discipline and righteous living?
2. Why do you think it’s so appealing to want a special formula or method of steps to practice to make change happen?
3. How will an accurate understanding of the process of sanctification help us become more patient with brothers and sisters who struggle over and over again with sins?

## PART 2 OF LESSON 2

II. (20:25) God is up to something! Change is His plan! Where is God taking us? What is our destination?

A. (20:52) Conformity to the image of His Son is the end or goal of the process of change God is working in you: “For those whom He foreknew He also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that He might be the firstborn among many brothers” (Rom 8:29).

B. Another way of saying this is: “work out your own salvation” for it is God who is working in us, fashioning us “to will and to work for his good pleasure” (Phil 2:12–13).

C. What will this look like in you and me for eternity?

1. You will be strong and healthy forever (Rev 7:15–17; Phil 1:20).
2. You will be fearless (Rev 21:25; Ps 4:3).
3. You will be good (Rom 8:29).
4. You will be all that is sketched in the beatitudes (Matt 5).
5. You will not be lonely (John 1:12).
6. You will be truly happy (Ps 16:11; 36:5).
7. You will be radiant and beautiful (Rev 21:11).
8. You will see Jesus face to face and will be absorbed with His centrality, majesty, grace and love (Rev 7:9–17).

D. (24:18) This yields several relevant questions for you and counselees:

1. Is this where your friend wants to go? Keep in mind this is the FINAL destination—not where you are right now or will be fully in this life. Not everyone wants to go here. Some may want the pain to disappear—but not by facing it in God’s way or by being conformed to His Son.
2. How far away are you from this destination? All of us are pretty far from it now. But when we see Him we will be like Him (1 John 3:1–3). Paul asserted that “for to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain” (Phil 1:21; Eph 4:12–13; 1 Cor 15:42–49). Though we’re a long way from where God is taking us, the crucial question for now is ...

3. (26:53) What direction are you going? This course is about making progress toward that destination. It's the progress that matters, not how fast you are traveling.

- Calvin in his *Institutes* says: some believers make leaps and bounds like a gazelle in some seasons of their lives. At other times we're crawling on our hands and knees and progress is slow. "It doesn't matter if you leap and bound or if you are crawling. What matters is the direction."
- There are Psalms that reflect these extremes of great hopefulness while in the battle (e.g., Ps 42, 43) and deep despair (Ps 88).
- The Christian life is about God restoring us to Christ's image.

4. Is this the level of change you want to help bring about in people? How deeply do you want to help people? At the surface level of external behaviors and feelings alone, or at the heart level of motives, loves, desires, and cravings as well? (Consider Paul Tripp's metaphor of stapling apples to a maple tree.) Mark 7:20–23 makes it clear where real change must occur.

5. (28:05) What gives you hope that this can actually happen in your life?

Two truths are foundational for your hope:

a. Your Father is the author of change—not you.

- "He who has begun a good work...will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ" (Phil 1:6; Ps 23; Ps 25:11).
- "...whom he did foreknowforeknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son" (Rom 8:29–30).
- "what we will be has not yet appeared" (1 John 3:2).

b. Jesus, by the Spirit as your focus, will bring about change—not your efforts, consistency, sincerity, or feelings of devotion (Gal 3:3): "Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh?"

- "This is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent" (John 17:3).
- "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain" (Phil. 1:21; 3:10ff).

- “I am the Alpha and the Omega” (Rev 1:8, 21:6, 22:13). The whole book of Revelation is written to bring God’s people to that assurance in their spiritual warfare.
- “I have no good apart from you” (Ps. 16:2).
- “The Lord is my chosen portion and my cup; you hold my lot” (Ps 16:5).
- “Whom have I in heaven but you...? My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is you are the strength of my heart and my portion for ever” (Ps 73:25,26).

6, Where is your hope for the change that God wants to produce in you? It’s in Him alone! The balance of this course is going to be showing you how to make that plain to yourself and those to whom you minister.

### **Questions For Reflection on Part 2**

1. How can understanding about our “destination” be an encouragement to brothers or sisters who are battling for change in their lives, losing some of those battles, battling some more, and losing again in the battle?
2. How important is the “I want to change” attitude in someone for change to happen? What if we don’t detect that “want” in our first conversations with a needy person?
3. Read Psalm 88 in a group. If you wanted to help a brother or sister with this wide landscape of experiences, can you see anything in the psalmist’s life that you could point to as a link to hope?



## PART 3 OF LESSON 2

III. (30:25) This brings us to consider a paradigm or helping pattern or model to move us toward God's Christ-like goal. God actually gives us a clear set of features involved with change. Our model organizes this set of change features into an order that can help us change personally and help others change.

1. (31:17) Paradigm/model: A paradigm is a way of seeing/thinking—a pattern. Another way to think of it is a *mental map of the landscape of life*, of how things relate to each other, *a way of interpreting* the stuff of life, of thinking how it all fits together.
2. In the case studies we'll consider there is a lot going on in each person's life: personal relationships, past upbringing and family history, health, problem-solving patterns, hopes and dreams, the ways they've learned to communicate, handle frustration, disappointment, failure, and success, the way the culture affects them, work environment, peers, family members, fears, how Christ fits into their lives and priorities.
3. Where do we begin with the complexity of things we hear in someone's life? A paradigm gives us a way of thinking about how all these pieces fit together, a way to make sense of life, and where we might want to start in our desire to help them.

IV. (32:36) We all use reality maps. We are all interpreters of life and have explanations for why things happen. This doesn't mean everyone's paradigm is valid/accurate. Just that they have one.

- A. How do we explain why people say the things they do? A clear New Testament illustration of this: Luke 6:43–45 affirms that the mouth speaks out of the overflow of the heart:

For no good tree bears bad fruit, nor again does a bad tree bear good fruit, for each tree is known by its own fruit. For figs are not gathered from thorn bushes, nor are grapes picked from a bramble bush. The good person out of the good treasure of his heart produces good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure produces evil, for out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.

In other words, things don't just get said or done—accidentally! They come out of us for reasons!

- B. Unbelievers and believers recognize this purposefulness or design feature in life: e.g., novelists, historians, songwriters, scientists, filmmakers.

C. C.S. Lewis *Chronicles of Narnia*, “the deeper knowledge.”

D. Job's counselors and their theology which amounted to., “You do evil, you get evil; you do good, you get good!”

E. Nebuchadnezzar's arrogance in Daniel 4:30: "Is not this great Babylon, which I have built by my mighty power...and for the glory of my majesty?" Of course, God confounds Nebuchadnezzar's pride by taking his sanity from him and eliciting a more realistic, humble mental map:

"...all the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing, and he does according to his will among the host of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand or say to him, 'What have you done?'" Daniel 4:35.

F. John depicts the seven-sealed scroll of providence as God's unfolding panorama of history that Jesus unveils (Rev 5).

G. Suffering saints who are waiting for justice to be served call to the Father, "How long?" (Rev 6:9–10). The Father's response, "Then they were each given a white robe and told to rest a little longer, until the number of their fellow servants and their brothers should be complete, who were to be killed as they themselves had been." (Rev 6:11). God has a plan! It's unfolding according to His schedule.

V. (36:14) We all operate with reality maps, ways to make sense of life, but our natural reality maps are skewed/distorted.

1. "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick...wicked" (Jer 17:9; Gen 6:5; Ps 10 and 14).
2. Jesus said, "He who is of the earth belongs to the earth and speaks in an earthly way." (John 3:31; Prov 1:7, 9:10).
3. Asaph wrote about his loss of perspective and what restored it in Psalm 73:1–20.

VI. (37:23) Six things about reality maps:

A. (1) The Bible gives us God's view of reality as He created it and intends it, in contrast to our own natural inclinations.

- "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path" (Ps 119:105-110)
- "The unfolding of your words gives light; it imparts understanding to the simple" (Ps 119:130)
- "The truth will set you free" (John 8:32).

B. (2) There is always another view/interpretation about life and reality!

- Genesis 3 makes it clear that there is an evil counselor with a reinterpretation and misrepresentation of the events in Genesis 3. The Serpent used the same data:

people, trees, fruit, freedom to eat. But he reinterpreted these items, put them in a different mental model of how they fit together. “God is afraid you’ll be like him.” “He’s stingy.” “You won’t die.”

- Psalm 2:2–3 illustrates by the nations and peoples who “plot in vain. “The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD and against his Anointed, saying, “Let us burst their bonds apart and cast away their cords from us.” This is like saying, “We want to be out from under His control! We want to be our own god!” This is the foolishness that is part of our being!

C. Accurate discernment, an accurate reality map, is connected to adopting God’s gaze (seeing what He sees and the way He sees). His intention, His purpose, is revealed in His Word!

- “For with you is the fountain of life; in your light do we see light.” (Psalm 36:9).
- “The fear of the Lord LORD is the beginning of knowledge...” (Prov 1:7).
- “The fear of the Lord LORD is the beginning of wisdom....” (Prov 9:10).
- “Trust in the Lord LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.” (Prov 3:5–6).
- “...until I went into the sanctuary of God...” (Psalm 73:17).

This is seeing the world as it really is—the “real world.” Every other perspective presents a fantasy world. Proverbs 14:12: “There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way to s in death.”

D. My identity has to do with knowing the parameters or boundaries God has for me—where I came from and where I’m going.

- Jesus was in conflict with Pharisees who asserted that Jesus’ testimony about Himself was not true. “Jesus answered, ‘Even if I do bear witness about myself, my testimony is true, for I know where I came from and where I am going.’” (John 8:14).
- Knowing the boundaries God has given us gives us a sense of security. Knowing where we come from—who our Creator and Redeemer is—gives security. Knowing where we are headed—what God has in store for us in this life and the one to come—gives great security. These are “the [boundary] lines [that] have fallen for me in pleasant places.” David affirms, “Indeed, I have a beautiful inheritance” (Ps 16:6).

E. As image bearers we naturally think in these terms. We almost automatically give some kind of meaning or interpretation to life and the happenings around us.

- The believer can think with contentment about the fact that God is up to something in all He does with and for His people. His plan is a good one.
- “And we know that for those who love God, all things work together for the good ” (Rom 8:28).
- “The path of the righteous is like the light of dawn, which shines brighter and brighter until full day” (Prov 4:18).
- The unbeliever has no such assurance. “The way of the wicked is like deep darkness; they do not know over what they stumble” (Prov 4:19).

F. (6) God’s plan is to establish His kingdom and to display His glory through His loving reign in, and through, and for His people. Jesus said that even the gates of hell cannot hinder God’s plan (Matt 16). Paul asserted in 1 Corinthians 15:25 that Jesus “must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet.” And “He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it” (1 Thess 5:24). God’s purpose is to change us and fulfill His plan of sanctification in us. God has “exalted above all things His name and His word” (Ps 138:2).

- Our paradigm, our reality map, therefore, will be accurate only as it matches God’s purpose and the interpretation He wants us to have for all the affairs of life (Prov 1:7, 9:10).

VII. (47:40) How do we apply this understanding to our pastoral counseling ministry? When we begin to use a mental model, there are a few things to keep in mind:

1. Like a map, the purpose of the map is not to know the map; it’s to help you know the city—i.e., someone’s life.
2. Use of the model will help you to understand how you or your friend sees life. Eventually the map will recede. It’s only a tool to get you oriented. Revisit it to keep a sense of where you are in your discussion of the important features of sanctification.
3. In the case studies we use, notice the patterns of ideas about how your friend sees and interprets life. Then continually test your thoughts about her motives, goals, understanding how life works, her place in her world, etc. Listen for her heart’s desires and affections and longings. Listen for your friend’s mental map. How is he or she organizing life and interpreting the things going on in and around him or her?
4. A good map is helpful when you are in a strange and confusing place—*like another person’s life*. But know that the details (e.g., potholes, dysfunctional traffic lights,

one-way streets, construction crews, pedestrian patterns) aren't on maps. The details of heart and life choices are where change must occur.

5. The model and questions let you know where you are, but each part of the model is for you to use as a *springboard* into specific life matters, trials, losses, fears, failures, disappointments, sins, worries, etc.—a springboard to direct the person's gaze at Christ and who He is in relation to the person's situation.

### **Questions For Reflection on response to Part 3 of Lesson 2**

1. "I don't have a filter to look through to explain life. I just see things the way they are. No colored glass lens for me." Is such a person interpreting life according to a particular perspective or lens or is he or she really an "objective" person—seeing things just as they truly are?
2. The bumper sticker reads, "We don't see things as they are. We see things as we are!" How will that understanding affect our listening to a brother or sister wanting our help?
3. How is a paradigm or helping model like a road map? What cautions would be wise to think about when using a mental road map to enter into another person's world?

### **Conclusion:**

In this lesson we've looked at features of God's plan of sanctification. We've seen that all the features of change revolve around dependence upon Christ by His Spirit through the Word.

We've also sketched the importance of using a biblical paradigm or mental map to help us navigate successfully through our own brokenness and to help others do the same.

In our next two lessons we will sketch two specific mental maps or paradigms that summarize biblical features about the way change happens to the glory of God making us like Jesus Christ.

## Lesson 3

### Eight Questions That Show How Change Happens

#### Objectives

Students will:

1. Identify eight questions that form the first of two helping models that we'll use to help ourselves and others change in needed ways.
2. Explain the meaning of the “vicious cycle of folly” and the “gracious cycle of wisdom.” Be able to contrast the biblical concepts of “folly” and “wisdom.”
3. Know that the first question, “What is your situation?” draws attention to what life events are coming at a person—things over which they have little or no control by nature (e.g., age, race, gender, birth order, health) as well as things that happen to them (e.g., personal history, the ways people treat them, difficult situations).
4. Know that the second question, “How are you reacting?” draws attention to the thoughts, emotions, self-talk, and reactions that they are experiencing.
5. Know that the third question, “What do you want?” vividly clarifies one’s reality-map. Every desire one has reveals his or her motives and God’s relevance or irrelevance to him or her.
6. Know that the fourth question, “What are the consequences or outcomes?” refers to the ways one’s situation spins off effects, which, in turn, become a new situation (first question) that generates more reactions, reveals motives, and spawns more consequences—i.e., the vicious cycle.
7. Be able to illustrate the vicious cycle with vignettes about grumbling and anger that the students can identify with.
8. Contrast the four questions of the gracious cycle of wisdom with those of the vicious cycle of folly.
9. Know the fifth question, the first of the gracious cycle, “Who is God the Father in this situation? Am I satisfied with His role?” “What does God reveal about Himself, you, and the situation you are in?” This interrupts the vicious cycle at the point of considering the situation (question one). This question invites one to consider who God reveals Himself to be in Himself and in relation to the person’s situation. God is in the situation with His purpose and sovereignty and gives the diagnostic tool of His law for us to help us know ourselves and come face to face with Him. He displays His mercy in Christ, never wasting His providence—He is always up to something!

10. Know the sixth question, “Who is Jesus the Son in this situation? Am I satisfied with my identity in Him? What beliefs and desires about Jesus and you and your setting should rule you?” What desires or person do you want to rule or master you? This question gives focus to the importance of the cross and the resurrection for who I am, right now, in my situation. It asks, “Am I satisfied with the sufficient, satisfying, beneficial and fruitful redeeming, sanctifying, and new creation work of Christ?” This question corresponds to the third question about my motives, what I want or demand in the vicious cycle. It asks, “Who is Jesus, the Good Shepherd, in my affections, passions, desires, right now, in this heated situation?” What do you know of your Master, the Lord Jesus? What does He offer, and what do you want from Him here and now?

11. Know the seventh question, “What should I do, by the Spirit’s power, in this situation?” This makes identity with Christ in the cross and in His resurrection a conscious backdrop or foundation for my “faith working through love.” This question corresponds to the second question (about my reaction in the situation) of the vicious cycle.

12. Know the eighth question, “What are the consequences?” This reveals the fruitfulness (sometimes pleasant outcomes and sometimes those with joy *and* assurance in suffering) of Christ-centered motives and intentionally righteous thoughts and behaviors.

13. Understand that the goal of “The Eight Questions” is to result in a change of one’s gaze or perspective about life and the world and to enjoy the “rest” that Jesus promises to those who “labor and are heavy laden” and who “come to me.” Seeing Christ in my situation is their objective.

(Note: minute and second notations, throughout the outline, correspond to approximate DVD video locations of Mentor Manual related content for this lesson.)

### **PART 1 OF LESSON 3**

- I. (1:05) “The Eight Questions” form two cycles or patterns of living: four questions make up a *vicious cycle of folly* and four a *gracious cycle of wisdom*.
  - A. (1:12) First, the vicious cycle of folly
    1. It’s vicious because all sin is destructive and cruel—even if it has the promise of life, happiness, satisfaction, security, or any other good thing.
    2. It’s a cycle because we can easily get stuck doing foolish things for foolish reasons, resulting in unpleasant consequences that we react to foolishly for more foolish reasons—round and round and round again, like a disk in a computer CDcd drive that just keeps whirring but never loads.
    3. It’s a vicious cycle of folly because these choices are foolish, morally stupid, made without interest in God’s perspective about how to live. Folly in the Bible doesn’t mean intellectually dumb. Rather, it is living without God’s view of life and values as one’s own.
  - B. (2:12) The gracious cycle of wisdom
    1. It is gracious because it’s God’s good provision, unearned and undeserved.
    2. It is a cycle because God has ordained that righteousness begets good fruit; “if you are wise, you are wise for yourself...ur wisdom will reward you...” (Prov 9:12). “The fruit of the righteousness is a tree of life” (Prov 11:350). “Whoever pursues righteousness and kindness , will find life, righteousness, and honor” (Prov 21:21).
    3. It is a cycle of wisdom because living with God’s mind in our life situations is always wise and in accord with God’s design for us; it’s the way off the vicious cycle of folly.
    4. (3:15) A life scene to illustrate the two cycles:
      - a. My wife, Betty, and I come from two different backgrounds.
        - i. Betty’s parents owned a store and lived above it, on the second floor, in a small county town two hours northwest of Philadelphia.



I came from a country home, a farm near Harrisburg.  
Betty learned to lock every door when she would leave home.

The store had been robbed by bands of gypsies over the years and some of these folks even got into their upstairs home while others swarmed suspiciously throughout the store wearing many pocketed skirts. This required requiring every eye to be on them.

Our family never locked anything. In fact, we would go away for a vacation for a week and never lock the house, the barn, tractor, or anything.

Now Rick and Betty meet in college, a romance begins in the juniorsenior year, and the romance leads to marriage when we graduate.

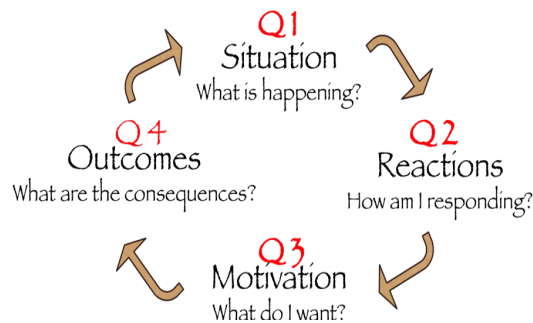
Fast forward 30+ years and we move to Chester and have six kids. I'm working as a school counselor in a local Christian school and it's Friday afternoon. It's the beginning of a break and two of our college kids are home from college with the rest of the family for the holiday. It's raining, and I pull up in the car with my laptop, books and papers to get from the car, up the sidewalk and a half dozen steps to the house. The house is full of people. But with laptop over my shoulder, briefcase in hand, and books clutched to my chest to not get wet, I grab for the door and turn the knob. It's locked...again! She's doing it again! On purpose. She does this literally, without exaggeration, all the time. She locks the outside doors always.

I have to put something down on the wet porch to get my keys out. My thoughts: "she's doing this just to make me angry! She's paranoid! She's obsessive! She's neurotic! The house is full of people and she still locks all the doors! She's been doing it for the 30+ years we've been married."

- ii. Consider the first of "The Eight Questions" to detect the vicious cycle of folly I am trapped in at the door.

The two cycles:

## Vicious cycle of folly



### A. The vicious cycle

1. Question 1: *What is your situation?* What is coming at you that you will react to? We live in the real world, not in a vacuum. Nothing is insignificant. Everything invites a reaction, so everything is important.

- a. There will be some things over which you have little or no control—*influences by nature*
  - i. Age (Are you young, a teen, a young adult? How do you think others think of you—as mature, immature? Does your age give you advantages or disadvantages?)
  - ii. Race (Do you think of your race very often? Are you of the majority culture? A minority culture? How do you think others think of your racial makeup? Is it important? Not important? Are you a victim? Are you powerless because of your race? Are you superior because of your race?)
  - iii. Gender (Does your gender entitle you to authority? Are you viewed as competent? Are you taken for granted, exploited or taken advantage of because of your gender? What expectations do others have for you?)
  - iv. Birth order (Are you treated like your siblings? Did you have stricter or looser discipline by your parents? Were you pushed to excel or not pushed to excel because of where you fell in the number of siblings you have? Were you given lots more or less attention than siblings?).
  - v. Health (Do you live with limitations because of your health? Are there health issues outside of your control that you have

to live with? Do you think others treat you differently, unfairly perhaps, because of your health matters?).

- vi. Everything is part of your situation. Much of your life you have no control over. These just happen to be part of your life by nature, by being born.
- b. But there are things or events that are happening to you once you are born. These are things outside of you that affect you—influences that nurture you. You have little or no control over some of these influence, as well as the more nature-oriented ones.
- i. People that like you or don't like you
  - ii. The kind of job you have
  - iii. Your parent's marital situation
  - iv. Your relationships to siblings
  - v. The friends you hung out with
  - vi. Your parents, and the parenting patterns that you lived with at home; the rules of your household, forms of discipline; their education, the socio-economic position of your family
  - vii. The way people treat you
  - viii. The church you've been part of
  - ix. The kind of teaching you received about the Christian life, roles of husband and wife, wise parenting, work and responsibilities to provide, and protect your family
  - x. The point at which you became a believer—child, teen, young or older adult
  - xi. The quality of school you attended
  - xii. The neighborhood you grew up in
  - xiii. Recognition people gave you/or not
  - xiv. There are hundreds of other ways life has come to bear upon you in your youth, young adult, and more mature years.

c. These and scores of other influences, including my own sin nature, from inside of me and outside of me are converging on my heart while I'm standing in the rain at the locked door.

d. (10:28) A scene to put yourself in:

i. You are stuck in traffic in your car or on a bus on your way to a doctor's appointment, a meeting with a friend that you've been trying to reconcile with, or an interview with a prospective employer for a promising job.

ii. Some external factors may be affecting you that you have little or no control over. For example: the weather, an overheated car blocking one of the lanes, etc.

iii. Some internal factors or influences growing out of your past relationships and people in your background, may influence the way you are seeing things. For example, your mom was diagnosed with cancer too late to do anything about it, and you need to get to this doctor's appointment so the same thing doesn't happen to you; your friend agreed to meet with you and being late will just confirm that you are as irresponsible as she thinks you are now; you want this job and need it to be responsible and to provide for your family. To be late could mean you lose the opportunity to make a good impression and to get the job.

iv. (11:53) The first question is, what is happening? What is coming at you? What's your situation? Consider things outside of you and things inside of you to answer this. Things that you largely can't control.

2. (12:09) Question 2: *How are you reacting?* (What are you doing? What thoughts are you having? What emotions are running through you? What are you saying out loud or to yourself?). We always react for a reason or reasons. For example, in our situations:

a. I'm standing at the door fuming. I'm angry, frustrated, accusatory, judgmental, and nasty in my thoughts, irritated in my words and reactions to Betty's cheery, "Hi, how are you?" when she sees me after I finally get inside, dripping wet.

b. How about you in the traffic jam, what reactions are you likely to have?

i. (13:25) Anger: from complaining to road rage, because of an interruption to your timetable or plans. ("Who's the idiot that scheduled that Penn Dot crew work for this hour of the day?!").

- ii. Nervous fear or anxiety from uncertainty of how this will affect your life. (“I could miss my appointment.” “I could lose the job.” “If I don’t show up, she’ll have more reason to think I’m as irresponsible and thoughtless as she thinks I am now.”)
  - iii. Escapism: “I don’t want to think about the problem right now.” So I do some things (channel surf on the radio, eat a snack) to take my mind off of the unpleasant possibilities because of the delay.
  - iv. Depression because of the seeming impossibility of being able to have your plans or expectations met.
  - v. Keep in mind that in any of our reactions, more may be going on here than just the immediate, surface anger, worry, escapism or depression as a reaction to the immediate situation.
  - vi. There is a strong connection between the faith you live with from moment to moment and how you respond. There are no accidental choices.
  - vii. These first reactions—anger, fear, anger, fear, escapism, depression—are God-substitutes. These reactions are coming from idolatrous desires with messages that you are believing at the moment about what should happen right now—if you had your way.
3. (16:24) Question 3: *What do you want?* What do you expect, demand, crave or believe that you must have right now? One’s reality map, way of making sense of the world and it’s happenings, is revealed clearly here. Every desire is in relation to your thoughts about God—at the very least, He is either relevant to life or irrelevant. What desire at the moment is mastering you?

Think about your situation—stuck in traffic: What is in your heart at the moment? What desire is mastering you?

- a. “I need to get where I want to go when I want to get there or something terrible may happen.” (schedule salvation).
- b. The doctor could have the answer to my problem (medical salvation).

- c. The interviewer may help me finally get my career on track (economic or occupational salvation).
  - d. The friend will finally respect and accept me (peer salvation).
  - e. In my case, standing wet at the locked door, I'm angry because my of sense of convenience is being blocked; my wife doesn't interpret life the way I do; she cares about things I don't care about—like locked doors. She doesn't respect my leadership and headship (respect or convenience salvation).
4. (18:11) Question 4: *What are the consequences?* Sooner or later outcomes from my reactions emerge. (These create a new situation to be reacted to.)
- a. In our traffic example consequences could include: road rage at being cut off; a missed diagnosis at the specialists that could have saved my life; a missed conversation that could have healed a friendship, etc.
  - b. These consequences become a new situation coming at you to which you will respond. Your responses will have more consequences that you will again react to, etc., etc., etc.
  - c. In my case, my grumpiness or attitude is detected quickly by others. "What's wrong, Dad?" "Boy, you were nasty to mom with your words, Dad." I can respond to this new situation (others' reactions to me) by making excuses, blaming my wife, being grumpy, dismissing it, any of dozens of poor reactions. OR I could move toward God's gracious cycle of wisdom.

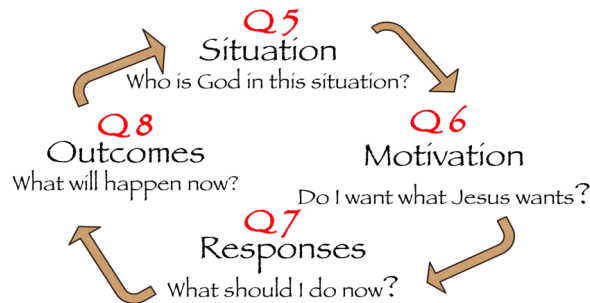
### **Questions for Rreflection on Part 1**

1. Explain the "cycle" feature of the "vicious cycle." What makes it a cycle?
2. In this model, explain why it *cannot* be said that things that influence us by our nature or by nurture in our lives "cause" our responses. They certainly do influence us. But how?
3. Do you agree with the statement, "There are no accidental choices"? Why or why not? Do you have any Scripture to support your opinion?
4. In a group, put yourself in the traffic situation and share how you may be tempted to respond. Explain why you may be motivated to react this way from the model we've presented so far.

## PART 2 OF LESSON 3

B. (19:54) The gracious cycle of wisdom is the way off the vicious cycle of folly.

### Gracious Cycle of Wisdom



51.. (20:15) Question 5:, “*Who is God the Father in this situation? Am I satisfied with His role?*” What does God reveal to be true about Himself and about you and your situation? Am I submitted to His rule as Creator, Father, Provider, Protector, and Guide? While there is no specific Bible verse about traffic jams, locked doors, or the thousands of other day to day events that we face in real living, God reveals that Hhe’s there, Hhe’s present and Hhe’s involved. This question emphasizes what I should *know* about God as my Father. The next emphasizes who I should *be* in Christ.

“Therefore let those who suffer according to God’s will entrust their soulsmselves to a faithful Ccreator while doing good” (1 Peter 4:19). God’s identity as Creator is significant. He’s put us together. There are no accidents.

a. (21:27) God reveals that He is there by His loving presence and purpose. One of the first reactions we give to troubling situations is to ask, “Why?” This is often a question of complaint. But if one starts to define the “why?” question with God’s wise purpose, it refocuses everything. He is up to something good.

i. *He may be refining me.* This trial may be the refiners fire to find out what I live for. Trials make us mature!

Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing (James 1:2–3).

ii. *He’s the vinedresser doing His pruning work.*

I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser.  
<sup>2</sup> Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit (John 15:1-2).

iii. *He's the loving Father knocking off rough edges in discipline to produce the peaceful fruit of righteousness.*

For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it (Heb 12:11).

iv. *He's the Good Shepherd equipping you to be more helpful as an undershepherd by the experiences that He brings your way.*

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God (2 Cor 1:3-4).

v. *God's purpose works for good for us because of His love in all our affairs (Rom 8:28).* It takes things like traffic jams and standing in the rain at a locked door *to reveal what our hearts are really aligned with.* They force me to see where I'm looking for refuge, safety and hope.

And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers (Rom 8:28-29).

His purpose is for our good! He uses our trials to move us along the path of sanctification:

Since therefore Christ suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves with the same way of thinking, for whoever has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin (1 Peter 4:1).



He uses our trials to display His power, goodness, grace, peace, and other fruit of His presence:

We rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us (Rom 5:3-5).

- b. (25:47) He reveals that He's involved by giving us His law. This is His deepest diagnostic tool for our hearts. He has not left us to fend for ourselves and figure out life on our own (but the law, doing good, has no power to make us acceptable to God or to change us).
  - i. The first two commandments are to love God and love our neighbor. The Spirit brings these things to mind when I'm standing at the door grumbling or when you are delayed in traffic.
  - ii. At the door, I'm erecting myself as the god to whose desires should be granted by others under my authority. Love for my neighbors (my family) have no place in my immediate thoughts. In the traffic jam, I have no love for my neighbor, for the bus driver, for the people holding up traffic (all related to the second great commandment). I have other gods before the true God. I'm coveting a reputation, my health, or a job as my security. Those are my first loves at that moment.
  - iii. But the law's first and second great commandments are a mirror and a lamp. They bring to view my moral landscape; , the things I prize most jealously in my world. They reveal everything that deviates from His law like a mirror. They show me the character of a godly person— God's character. "ThroughBy the law comesis the knowledge of sin" (Rom 3:20).
  - iv. BUT, the law can't change me. Paul battled with himself to change by his own efforts. He couldn't do it. He cried, "Wretched man that I am!, Who will deliver me from this body of death?" (Rom 7:24)? Paul asks, "Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law or by hearing with faith?" (Gal 3:2)? The law, living by rules and depending upon them for enduring change of any kind, is a false

hope. Laws or rules have no such power. Law and rules only condemn—like a mirror, they show my deficiencies, where I need to be cleaned up. You don't tear the mirror off the wall and try to wash yourself with it. It only reveals the dirt. It doesn't wash it away. It's the blood of Christ that cleanses us from sin (1 John 1:7).

- c. (27:58) The cross has to do with your acceptance and your boldness to live righteously in spite of your current temptations to sin or your failures in the immediate setting. Your ability to be righteous on your own doesn't exist. Righteousness is in Christ alone. Does your thinking about the law's diagnosis of your failures move you to trust Christ's finished work on the cross? Does your status, in Christ, soundly motivate you to pursue change? More of this is addressed in the next question about motives.

26. (28:41) Question 6: *"Who is Jesus the Son in this situation? Do I want what Jesus wants in this situation? Am I satisfied with my identity in Him? With who He wants me to be, not simply so much what He wants me to do? (Doing is the focus of the next question.) What beliefs and desires about Jesus and you and your setting should rule you?"* What desires or person do you want to rule or master you?

- a. This question gives focus to the importance of the cross and the resurrection for who I am, right now, in my situation. It asks, "Am I satisfied with the sufficient, satisfying, beneficial and fruitful redeeming, sanctifying, and new creation work of Christ?"

- b. This question corresponds to the third question about my motives, what I want or demand in the vicious cycle. It asks, "Who is Jesus, the Good Shepherd, in my affections, passions, desires, right now, in this heated situation?" What do you know of your Master, the Lord Jesus? What does He offer and what do you want from Him here and now?

- c. Do I want to be what He wants me to be in this situation? Am I satisfied with His likeness in this situation? Whose voice do you WANT to listen to? Is Jesus' identity (and my identity in Christ) enough as my prophet, priest, and king? Am I satisfied with my identity in Christ? With who He says I am and what I have in Him?

- d. What are you ruled by? His truth or your fiction? His reality or your fantasy? God wants thoughtfulness about the cross and the resurrection to shape you (Gal 2:20; 1 Cor 2:1,2; Gal 6:14).

e. (29:23) Consider the cross!

“So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.” (Rom 6:11a).

- i. What’s the death of Christ have to do with the fact that you are in your immediate situation and not in Hell?
- ii. What’s the death of Christ have to do with your interpretation of your situation?
- iii. What’s His death have to do with destroying any evil plan of the Evil One?
- iv. What’s it say about God’s anger toward you?
- v. What’s the cross do to the way God looks at you as a member of His family?
- vi. What’s it mean about the way your Father will treat His family members?
- vii. What’s the cross mean about your future and God’s intent to use you—with all your weaknesses and troubles? “He who did not spare his own son, but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things” (Rom 8:32).?

f. (30:26) Consider the resurrection! “Consider yourselves to be dead to sin and alive to God, in Christ Jesus” (Rom 6:11).

- i. How does His victory connect with your immediate frustration?
- ii. Does being in Christ have anything to do with whether your immediate circumstances are greater or Christ’s plan is greater?
- iii. What determines the final outcome for you?
- iv. Does His resurrection have anything to do with resources that are now yours in your situation?
- v. Are your resources limited to what you can see with your own eyes?

vi. Does His resurrection affect whether your situation is 'devastating loss' or 'irretrievable opportunity' that is likely to be coming at you?

vii. Does His aliveness mean anything about His presence with you by His Spirit?

g. (31:13) Consider how the work of Christ is...

i. *Sufficient*. "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever" (Ps 23:6; see also Ps 16:5–6 & Gal 2:20).

ii. *Satisfying*. "I say to the LORD, 'You are my Lord; I have no good apart from you'" (Ps 16:2; see also Ps 73:25–26), "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain" (Phil 1:21). Keep in mind the context of Philippians 1:21. Paul has been the object of criticism and gossip by members of the Philippian church. Can you be satisfied with God's glory in your experience by being satisfied with His care, providence, and love?

iii. *Beneficial and fruitful*, "The lines have fallen for me in pleasant places; indeed, I have a beautiful inheritance" (Ps 16:6). "They still bear fruit in old age; they are ever full of sap and green, to declare that the LORD is upright; he is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in him" (Ps 92:14–15). See also Ps 16:11; Ps 34:6; John 15:1–5; Eph 2:10.)

h. (32:42) So what do you want to rule you? In your traffic delay? What do you need to review about Christ in your life at this time? Is His provision sufficient, satisfying, beneficial and fruitful? In my rain-soaked, door-locked event, will this meditation on the Word matter? Will it make a difference?

i. Psalm 1 says it will. It will make me fruitful even in the dry times! Meditation makes me "like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers" (v.3)

i. (33:24) This is not "self-talk" in the pop-psychological sense of the term. Meditation does involve talking to yourself. But it is not saying "magic words." It is thinking about the truth of Christ's death and resurrection and their significance to you. It's an identity matter—I'm in Christ. I'm counting myself to be dead, yet alive in Him, and therefore yielding my members as instruments of righteousness. Change is by His power, not my willpower (Rom

6:11–13). It emerges from my identity in, and satisfaction with, Christ.

### **Questions for Reflection on Part 2**

1. Think of a tempting setting—one like the traffic or at-the-door-in-the-rain situations. One in which you have been tempted to respond sinfully. What are some of the attributes and character qualities of God that are relevant to such a situation? Explain how these features of God’s character could bear on your own spirit and heart attitudes if you thought about them in your tempting circumstance.
2. How can the law or my awareness of how “I should” respond distract me from trusting Christ and reaffirming my identity as dead and alive in Him? On the other hand, how could it also make me depend upon Christ and His Spirit?
3. How is this approach of reflecting on the gospel and my identity with the death and resurrection of Christ different from the common psychological approaches (even those taught by Christian psychologists and counselors) to helping people? Isn’t this just a “Christianized” set of mind games we play?

### PART 3 OF LESSON 3:

3. (34:44) Question 7: *What should you DO now, by the Spirit, in this situation?* What response is Christ calling for? This is the doing, godly-reacting-in-the-situation question. It needs to emerge from your thoughts about who God is in the situation (question 5) and who you are in Christ in the situation (question 6).

As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, since it is written, 'You shall be holy, for I am holy' (1 Peter 1:14–16).

In the traffic example, what can you do to yield your members as instruments of righteousness as Romans 6:13 commands? What can I do standing at the door that would mean being holy as He is holy? At least two things:

a. (35:20) *Reflect* on the cross and resurrection of Christ—think about all that you have and are in Christ because of His death and resurrection. A few such riches include:

- You have forgiveness.
- There is no condemnation to those in Christ Jesus.
- You have assurance of salvation because of Christ's love and His Spirit that bears witness with your spirit.
- You have an adopted identity.
- You are an heir.
- You are a king.
- You are a priest.
- He shepherds you as one of His sheep.
- You are a child of God by rebirth and adoption.
- You are part of His family.
- You are a joint heir with Christ.
- You are Jesus' brother (He's not ashamed to call us brothers).
- You have a deposit/down payment (the Spirit) of your inheritance.
- You have the guidance of the Spirit.
- You have the witness of the Spirit.
- You know that "...all things..." good for you and necessary for you will come to you (Rom 8:32)
- Your sanctification/likeness to Christ is guaranteed.
- You have a certain hope that all things work for good.
- You have an eternity with Christ, the Lamb of God, King of Kings, Lord of Lords.
- You may enjoy the power of the Spirit.

- You may enjoy the presence and communion in the Spirit with Christ and the Father.
  - You have the fruit of the Spirit.
  - You have usefulness in His kingdom.
  - You have gifts of the Spirit for help to others.
  - God rewards you for using what He gives you and empowers you to use His gifts.
  - You have the privilege to suffer and die for His sake.
  - You have a new family (the church) to care for and by whom you are cared for.who cares for you.
  - You have the privilege of worshiping the Lamb in eternity—not being condemned/separated from Him.
- b. (38:12) *Ask*, “What can I now do to display faith working through love?” (Galatians 5:6 has Paul’s summary of what counts in the Christian life. (See also 1 Tim 1: 5; 1 Peter 2:24–25; Luke 6:28–29; Rom 11–13.)
- i. In this traffic jam:
- Take a deep breath, relax, and reflect on who you are in Christ—worship! Give thanks! Your Father is up to something!
  - Think, “How can I love my neighbors?” Smile at a couple of people. Serve as you are able, just because you are His “workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works” (your temptation is for all your focus to be on yourself at this time).
  - Pray for your family, church, missionaries, etc.
- ii. At the door, in the rain:
- Ask Christ to remind you who you are in Christ; give thanks for a faithful wife; acknowledge that living in Chester, a sometimes dangerous city, it’s good to have a wife who seeks to protect her family; I can remind myself that this situation gives me the opportunity to reflect God’s grace and patience to my wife and family.
  - Greet them joyfully and thankfully.

4. (39:13) Question 8: *What are the consequences of such godly responses?*

- a. Contentment and the peace of God, because of thanksgiving for the cross, acceptance and redemption, a future due to God's grace (Phil. 4:6), a good heavenly Father who is in charge.
- b. Maybe your actions prevent a killing/fender bender (e.g., road rage murders do occur).
- c. Maybe you get the job because of your apologetic but unrattled reaction to what you can't control. Maybe you don't because you were late and thought to be disorganized and irresponsible. But that night, you get a call from a parent who found drugs in his teen's dresser and is coming apart with fear and anxiousness over what he or she cannot control. Your trial was way less serious, maybe, but it still has the same kind of heart desires for Christ's will and commitment to His wise purpose. "I'm not in control, but the loving, wise, sovereign Savior is. And He means this for good. He is still ruling." This is a different trial in degree, but not really in kind. Who will be my master? Who is my Messiah in this situation?
- d. You miss the doctor's appointment and discover a month later that it was cancer that if it had been caught a month earlier would be less complicated and less life-threatening. You may become a willing discipler of others in such desperate life-threatening situations. As you suffer, you may display the grace of God and encourage others as Paul did: "most of the brothers, having become confident in the Lord by because of my imprisonment, are much more bold to speak the word without fear" (Phil 1:14).
- e. Another outcome: You learn to trust in the future grace that belongs to you (2 Cor 12:9).

III. (42:34) We have three goals with "The Eight Questions":

- A. *To help you become reoriented*, to see the world and the troubles in it with a different gaze (through the lens of redemption) and to see it the way God sees it—through the lens of the cross/the gospel.
- B. *To give you rest*. Shalom (wholeness/peace, Matt 11:28). We often think that our troubles/pains/sufferings/losses are like a bobsled run. They seem to move so fast and have no exit until the end. It's like white water rafting in turbulent rapids: once you start a rapid you don't get out of the rapid until it's over. BUT ...*the cross, our redemption, offers other put-out places*, it slows down the life flow. One doesn't have to wait until the run or rapid is over to enjoy the Lord. Some rapids or bobsled runs just don't end quickly. Sometimes the end is out of sight altogether. But "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble" (Ps 46:1). "The Eight Questions" tease apart troublesome moments



and slow the pace down to help make sense of what is going on, what God is doing, and what God wants to do through them. Some things don't resolve themselves quickly. "The Eight Questions" allow you to pull apart the forces that threaten you and give you solid ground to stand on, to enjoy the Good Shepherd's rest, in the midst of the storm.

- C. *To equip you to write your own personal slice-of-life event and apply "The Eight Questions" to it in preparation for our next class. Imagine a camera zooming in on you and your heart during a challenging moment of personal temptation and trial. Slow the camera down by answering "The Eight Questions." This is the first of several vignettes or scenes you'll be writing about in this course. Three things about vignettes or scenes:*
1. This could be an event that occurs in as little as 30 seconds or a couple of minutes.
  2. Don't get stuck on Question 1 (situation), 2 (your reaction), 4 (the outcomes of your reaction), or 7 (what you "should do"). Summarize those, but give most attention to questions 3, 5, and 6. These are the most demanding because they focus on your heart and its desires and motives. Use the questions to pull apart your thoughts and motives so that you can look at what you are saying and believing, and not saying and believing at the moment, as I did with the "locked out in the rain" and the "stuck in traffic" illustrations.
  3. No more than three pages, please. Identify each of the "The Eight Questions" you ask and answer.

### **Questions for Reflection on Part 3**

1. In the questions of Part 2, you were asked to think of a situation in which you could be tempted to react sinfully. You were asked to think of character qualities of your Father that could affect your spirit and heart at that time. Now is the time to reflect on what you "should" do in the situation. The Scriptures don't want only inside change but outside change as well. Identify three inside and three outside things you can do in your situation.
2. Why do you think your Father allows things to "not work out" for you at times? Why doesn't He "answer prayers" with solutions or outcomes that you request? What *good* could He be up to? Or is it just a lack of faith? Maybe if I just pray harder...
3. If you applied "The Eight Questions" to trying situations, would this "slow the video down?" How could this be helpful? What could hinder you from making this kind of effort? How could this be like the experience your counselees may have? What do you think you could do to encourage them to persevere with "The Eight Questions"?

**Conclusion:**

In this lesson we've looked at the first of two helping models or mental maps to help us find our way through the many things going on in troubling experiences we have. The map gives us a sense of what causes the vicious cycle of folly and how to leave it and get on the gracious cycle of wisdom—all centered in Christ.

We've also used two real life situations to illustrate how these questions can help us examine or tease apart our sense of what is happening outside and inside of us and how to bring the gospel to bear on these situations.

In our next lesson we will sketch a second mental map or helping model in a simple picture of three trees.

We'll show how the two helping models relate to each other. Finally, we'll show how they summarize biblical features about the way change happens for Christ-likeness leading to the glory of God.

**Lesson 4**  
**The Three Trees**  
**(Another Way To View How Change Happens)**

Objectives

Students will:

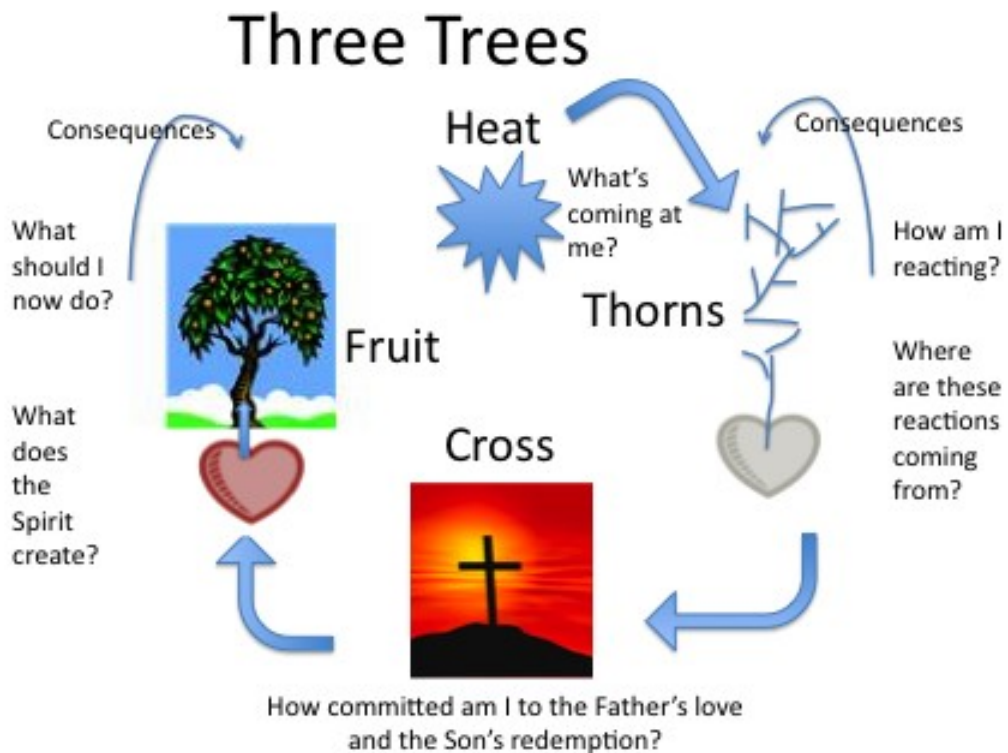
1. Reproduce the diagram of the “Three Trees” metaphor with “heat,” “thorns,” “cross,” and “fruit” features for seeing change in the Christian.
2. Reproduce the diagram with modifications for unbelievers or believers.
3. Be able to show Jeremiah 17:1–15 is an example of how the Bible commonly employs the elements of the “Three Trees” metaphor.
4. Understand how to relate the “Three Trees” metaphor to “The Eight Questions.”
5. Show how the heat, thorns, heart and consequences illustrate the first four questions of the vicious cycle for an unbeliever or wrongly focused Christian, and how the heat, good tree, good fruit and consequences illustrate the last four questions of the gracious cycle because of the third tree—the cross.
6. Observe that Psalm 50 shows that God’s professing people and unbelievers can both have hearts that are off center (without God in the proper place). The Psalm also illustrates that both have the same need—genuine thankfulness that displays both a living, on-going faith and repentance.
7. Explain how the Aaron case study illustrates elements of the “Three Trees” metaphor and “The Eight Questions” and how Aaron’s life gives different access points for a helper to begin to talk to him.
8. Share a personal vignette and how theythey have’ve applied “The Eight Questions” to their story.

(Note: minute and second notations, throughout the outline, correspond approximately to DVD video locations of Mentor Manual related content for this lesson.)

## PART 1 OF LESSON 4 (1:28)

### I. The “Three Trees” metaphor

A. (1:40) There are four main figures: heat, thorns, cross and fruit.



1. A spiked circle at the top is labeled “heat.” This symbolizes anything coming at us that invites a response. The heat is what is happening. It’s the situation in question one of “The Eight Questions.”
2. The first tree is a thorny, barren bush or tree that represents reactions to the heat. The reactions of the barren tree emerge from an unclean heart. My responses and my cravings, desires, demands, and wants are bundled in this heart and bear thorny reactions. These reactions have some nasty, negative consequences, represented by the thin arrow that loops around at the top of the thorn tree and that then becomes additional “heat.” All three of

these: reactions, heart, and consequences are wrapped up in this thorn bush feature of the “Three Trees” picture.

3. (2:50) The second tree, the cross, is the transition point—from a heart craving anything other than Christ, to one that craves and desires Him and His will and the Father’s will above everything else.
4. The third tree is a fruit-bearing tree, displaying the Fruit of the Spirit—godly responses, emerging from a heart that is renewed and transformed by the Spirit, because of my death to sin and aliveness to God in Christ. This fruit also has effects or consequences.

B. (3:30) The more growth in grace a believer has, the more quickly he’ll run to the cross and see God-produced fruit and its effects. Those without a relationship to Christ don’t go to the cross and will only be able to witness their own thorny (and Spirit-less) responses and corresponding consequences that come from them.

(4:56) One passage is especially helpful to see all these features active in our experience: Jeremiah 17:5–13.

‘Thus says the Lord:  
‘Cursed is the man who trusts in man  
and makes flesh his strength,  
whose heart turns away from the LORD.

He is like a shrub in the desert, and shall not see any good come.

He shall dwell in the parched places of the wilderness, in an uninhabited salt land.

Blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD, whose trust is the LORD.

He is like a tree planted by water, that sends out its roots by the stream, and does not fear when heat comes, for its leaves remain green, and is not anxious in the year of drought, for it does not cease to bear fruit.

The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick;  
who can understand it?

I the Lord LORD search the heart and test the mind, to give every man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his deeds.

Like the partridge that gathers a brood that she did not hatch,

so is he who gets riches but not by justice; in the midst of his days they will leave him, and at his end he will be a fool.

A glorious throne set on high from the beginning  
is the place of our sanctuary.

O LORD, the hope of Israel, all who forsake you shall be put to shame; those who turn away from you shall be written in the earth, for they have forsaken the LORD, the fountain of living water..”

C. (6:23) The background of this passage is God’s warning to Judah, the Southern Kingdom. They are following the Northern Kingdom’s patterns of evil and idolatry and will suffer captivity and God’s disciplining heavy hand. After this prophetic warning, and within Jeremiah’s lifetime, God did bring the Babylonians upon Judah for his His disciplinary and refining purposes. In Jeremiah 17:5–13, Jeremiah uses word pictures to illustrate what the Jews will experience and why they will experience it. Both trees, godly and ungodly Israelites, are seen to be in a desert wasteland—Judah’s corrupt culture, leadership, and idolatry. Consider our four pictures and those in the passage:

First there is:

1. (6:33) Heat

- a. Compare the parched ground for both trees at various times (17:6,8): “desert”; “the parched places of the wilderness”; “when heat comes”

He is like a shrub in the desert,  
and shall not see any good come.

He shall dwell in the parched places of the wilderness,  
in an uninhabited salt land...when the heat comes...in  
the year of drought.

2. (6:49) Thorns and fruit:

- a. Notice the thorn bush and fruit tree in the diagram and in this passage. Both emerge from the heart and have negative or positive effects or consequences. Ask: What causes this fruit to grow? What keeps fruit from growing ? Is it the heat or is it the kind of tree or shrub (the heart) that is growing?

- b. Contrast the hearts

- i. “Cursed is the man who trusts in man and makes flesh his strength, whose heart turns away from the LORD” (17:5).
- ii. “Blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD, whose trust is the LORD” (17:7). The repetition is for emphasis. This is the one who is blessed!

The soil (heart) is the source out of which these two trees emerge—not the heat!

- c. Contrast the two trees, the good fruit or thorns on the trees, and the outcomes/consequences of the fruit and thorns
  - i. 17:5 “cursed”
  - ii. 17:6 “like a shrub in the desert,” “shall not see any good,” “uninhabited.”
  - iii. 17:8 “like a tree planted by water,” “sends out its roots by the stream.”
  - iv. 17:6 “shall dwell in the parched places..., in an uninhabited salt land,” “shall not see any good”
  - v. 17:7,8 “blessed,” “does not fear when heat comes,” “leaves remain green,” “is not anxious in the year of drought,” “does not cease to bear fruit.”
- 3. (8:10) The third tree—the cross of Christ—is what makes the difference (17:7, 8).
  - a. LORD is YHWH (I AM), the Redeemer. This is the covenant name of God. This is the name he uses to speak of himself. He uses to speak of himself as the deliverer, the Savior and covenant keeper of his people. YHWH becomes identified as the source of the promises the Messiah will fulfill. He’s even identified as the Messiah in later chapters of Jeremiah. During His lifetime, Jesus claimed to be identified with YHWH. The Jewish authorities understood what He was claiming and tried to kill Him because He was claiming to be YHWH (John 8:58–59). He didn’t deny it at all but repeatedly made that connection.
  - b. A connection with YHWH produces the fruit. The heart’s orientation to the LORD comes into view as the believer trusts Christ and is made a fruitful, flourishing tree by the Spirit.

- c. Having begun by faith, this person continues to see change take place by faith. “his leaves remain green...he does not cease to bear fruit” (v.8). He is like the believer Paul talks about who practices righteousness because of his acceptance by God and his newly raised life in Christ (Gal 2:20).
- d. He has new desires: “Love that issues from a pure heart, and a good conscience, and a sincere faith” (1 Tim 1:5; see also Gal 5:6—the believer displays “faith working through love”).
- e. These new, righteous behaviors that emerge from a new heart also have consequences (the arrow at the top of the fruit tree) that loop back around and affect him and others in his life.

D. (9:54) March Madness (vignette-case study)

Rick’s grumbling during the final four of March Madness when the family wants to play Speed Scrabble.

1. (10:04) Heat (in the vicious cycle)

What is the situation? (Q1): My wife, daughter and son-in-law want to play a game after the grandkids were put to bed. I had been hoping all day to watch the Final Four match-up.

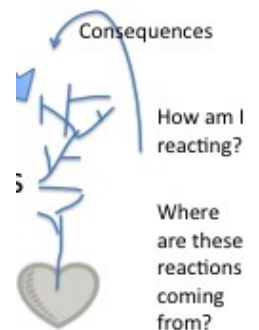


2. (10:25) Thorns/heart/consequences

a. My reaction (Q2): grumblingly come to the table when called to play. After a few hands, I grumbled some more because I was not winning.

b. My desires (Q3): I wanted to be in the living room watching the basketball game, and if I had to be at the table game, I wanted to be winning.

c. Consequences (Q4): I was irritable and I cast a cloud of discomfort over everything. I made the time heavy and not pleasant by my attitude.





3. (10:49) Cross (in the gracious cycle of wisdom)

a. Who is God in the situation (Q5)? He orchestrated it. He is loving in all His acts and faithful in all His ways. He is sovereign and only does and allows what is good for me. He's my Father and knows exactly what surgery is needed in my life.

Cross



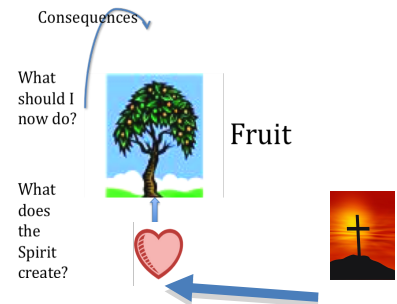
How committed am I to the Father's love and the Son's redemption?

He wants me to be satisfied with Christ, His redemptive and providential provision and promise and His approval of me in Christ. He wants me to be content with His love and care and be desirous of having His character of sacrifice and suffering and His joy formed in me.

b. Who do I want Christ to be in my life (Q6): My sin of self-interest was just that—sin. It spun off a variety of nasty effects and mostly was dishonoring to Christ. My satisfaction is in Christ, not my choice of a winner of the final four. He's redeemed me; He's made me alive; He's blessed me with an inheritance, the Spirit, the blessings of a family, grandkids, a ministry, etc. He is my good Shepherd.

4. (12:38) Fruit in the gracious cycle

a. What should I now do? (Q7): He wants me to respond with the wisdom from above, particularly to be peaceable, gentle, full of mercy and good fruits, easy to be entreated (James 3)—all features of God's wisdom that I was devoid of at first. He wants me to do this because of my satisfaction with Christ and my desire to see His character formed in me.



He wants me to display faith working through love (Gal 5:6) to my family. I needed to confess my self-centeredness, my pride, and my unChristlikeness—my sin.

b. What are the consequences? (Q8): Upon confession, the cloud lifted. We were all able to enjoy Scrabble. I lost the game and missed the final four with grace and contentment, doing the will of God. It was tough, and I had to continue to remind myself of the cross concepts noted above. But I was able to enjoy our family and help them enjoy the family time as well. I modeled how to handle sin and who it was that was most important to this weak, in-process saint.

### **Questions for Reflection on Part 1**

1. Review Jeremiah 17:10–13. How do the illustrations of the “partridge” and her “brood” and the “throne...our sanctuary” fit into our “Three Trees” model?
2. Go back over the March Madness vignette and apply “The Eight Questions” to my experience and relate them to the “Three Trees” features (heat, thorns, cross, fruit). This is what we’ll be doing in the next part of this lesson. But see what you can do to make the connections in my March Madness story.
3. Isn’t giving all this attention to the heart really unnecessary? Why does it matter where our reactions come from? Isn’t it enough to just change our reactions and give people positive things to do to replace their foolish or hurtful reactions? Why or why not?

## PART 2 OF LESSON 4

II. (14:00) How “The Eight Questions” correspond to the “Three Trees” diagram: Consider your experiences in the traffic illustration used earlier. You’re stuck in traffic and could miss the doctor’s appointment, a meeting to reconcile with a friend, or an interview with a prospective employer. Which features could fit with each element of the diagram?

A. (14:40) First, the right side of the diagram—heat and thorns:

Heat



1. Heat-(The vicious cycle of folly) What’s happening? (Q1)  
This may be good experiences or tough/difficult hardships, from inside or outside of us; anything that invites a response from us.

Illustration: In the “stuck in traffic” illustration something is outside of your control. The heat of the situation is coming at you.

2. (15:16) Thorns/heart/consequences are all lumped together in our picture.

- a. What reactions/responses are forthcoming? (Q2): What does this thorn bush produce? Are you angry in the traffic jam? Anxious? Happy because you didn’t want the doctor’s appointment.?



- b. What generates the thorny responses (Q3)?  
What kind of bush or tree is this? If a bush is producing thorns, what kind of bush/tree is it?  
Illustration: Are you looking to your doctor or the possible job interview as your savior? Your security? Your hope? (Ps 50; Mark 7)



- c. (18:41) What are the consequences of your poor, thorny responses? (Q4): Are you rattled and nervous at the interview, and therefore lose the job opportunity? OR does your calmness sell the prospective employer on your ability to handle interruptions? Do you miss the doctor’s appointment and find out later that you could have been spared some health difficulties if you had made it to the appointment?



**Now the tree that makes a difference:**

B. (19:44) The bottom of the diagram: the cross

Heat is still present, but now you are asking the right questions (Q5 and Q6).

This is the motives/heart commitment realm. moves from a thorn bush to a fruit tree; from a decision point of repentance to a lifestyle of repentance because of the cross—the settled commitment to trust Christ’s death and subsequent resurrection (the gospel) as the ongoing, daily, way to live.

Cross

One



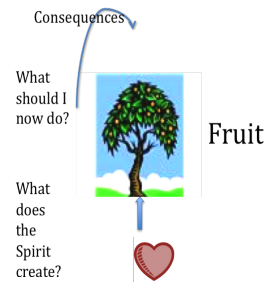
“I have been crucified with Christ nevertheless...I live by faith in the Son of God...” (Gal 2:20).



Q5 and Q6 ask: Who is the living God? What’s He have to do with the situation? With me? With others? How do I want Jesus to be involved? What does my new identity in Christ have to do with what my heart loves? Is His will my will? Or do I want something else for my refuge? My savior? Am I satisfied with God my Father and with Jesus my Redeemer and their will for me?

C. The left side of the diagram (heat and fruit). What does the Spirit want me to do in my situation?

(22:18) Heat is still present, but now fruit from the good tree and its roots grows and has God-designed consequences. (This figure represents what I now do because my identity and my heart’s desires are different. It’s related to Q7, “What should I now do?” And Q8, “What are the consequences?” (James 1:25)



## **Questions for Reflection on Part 2**

1. The two helping models are connected. Do either of them make more sense to you for counseling yourself when trials come your way?
2. Write out “The Eight Questions” and draw the “Three Trees” diagram from memory.
3. Are there situations where you think “The Eight Questions” might be more helpful to you in your counsel? Where “Three Trees” might be more helpful?

**PART 3 OF LESSON 4**

III. (23:38) Case study: Aaron

- A. The vicious cycle features of Aaron’s life. *Use the chart in the appendices to fill out your observations in each of these areas.* We’ll select a few items in each vicious cycle area.

Start to organize what we’re hearing into four categories (trying to answer, “What was Aaron’s problem?” won’t work because there is not any one thing.) What life facts from the case study may fit into each model feature?

- 1. (24:25) Situation: What is happening? What is coming at him? What is inviting reactions from him?

Situation, Q1 (heat)
Marriage is poor; wife is pressuring him for more income
Senses his kids are disappointed in him
Mother has physical needs/ siblings won’t help
Professional and Christian commitments are in conflict
Weight/threat of diabetes/family health history— early death of his father

- a. His marriage and relationships to his kids are poor. Failure faces him on both fronts. His father’s own lack of attention and failure as a parent and husband keep staring him in the face in his memories.

- b. His mother’s needs and his siblings’ dependence on him put pressure on him.
- c. His professional and Christian commitments are in conflict right now with this new production opportunity.
- d. His weight, stress, threat of diabetes, and possible early death stare him in the face.

2. (25:15) How is he reacting? What thorns show up?

- a. He is flirting with an online partner and thinking of going to be with her for a weekend.
- b. He reminds his kids how fortunate they are to have him as a father.
- c. He’s stressed because of a conflict at work between his Christian values and the values of an artist he’s asked to help record and produce for.
- d. He works long hours, spends little time with his wife (avoids her), and lately erupts with anger toward her more and more frequently.
- e. He thinks of suicide as a way out of so much failure.
- f. He’s begun using marijuana and alcohol with friends as a way of escape and to feel better.

Responses, Q2 or (Q7)
Flirts online with a woman and thinks of meeting up with her
Reminds his kids how fortunate they are to have a dad like him
Stresses because of mother’s needs and siblings’ inability to help

Stresses b/c of the conflict
Works long hours to avoid time with his wife; anger is erupting more frequently toward her
Considers suicide as a way out
Uses marijuana and alcohol with friends to feel better

3. (26:15) What does he want? Crave? Desire? Demand?

a. What Aaron is experiencing on the inside and outside doesn't necessarily *explain* him, but they do locate or describe his life right now—that is, they show how he's living and thinking, his expressed desires, and his responses. His experiences show what he is facing and how he's facing it—with sin or love and faith or idolatry of one form or another. He can heed any of the thousand voices of advice along with his own desires coming at him.

b. He has a way of looking at the present, the future, and the past that feed his desires.

c. The culture says your past and genetics (nurture and nature) determine who you are. Biblically speaking, they are significant, but they don't dictate or determine the choices you make in the present time when facing options. These factors are significant and may invite responses, but we do not need to be slavishly obedient to the invitations. They can't "make" us do anything. But they do invite us and attract us toward certain choices.

d. (27:30) Motivations are not primarily "psychodynamic" (exclusively internal forces that control me—desires, interests, feelings, motives, self-image, thinking). The world's focus is on getting in touch with yourself, your inner child, your feelings in troubling situations. This is a misdirection because it excludes God. He is involved in every life situation with us—whether we acknowledge it or not. The focus we need to have is, "Where am I in my thoughts, feelings, and desires in relation to God, my Creator, my Lord and my Savior while in these circumstances? Where is my



will in relation to His? Where is my satisfaction in relation to His purpose for me and those in my life?" Internal thoughts and feelings, alone, are a mis-focus. They are the way that seems right to a man that ends in death (Prov 14:12).

e. (28:35) What are some of Aaron's desires/motives?

i. Fear of man—his music peers, his wife, his sons and their expectations, his church friends, even Jesus.

ii. Fear of failure—not meeting his parents' or his wife's expectations; his performance as a father; his marriage; his testimony is at risk; his self-respect because of his drugs and on-line romance relationship; the possibility of rejection by his professional peers if he asserts his Christian convictions.

iii. Relationship with his wife—they barely see each other; anger is under the surface and breaks out more commonly; she's not satisfied with his "success."

iv. Role with his kids—they are disappointed; his sons are also more athletic than he was and they may look down on him; he spends little time with them.

v. Role with his work associates—they think of him as demanding, angry, insensitive, and selfish.

vi. Love of pleasure—looking for a "refuge" (a leading theme in Psalms) in his new romance, marijuana use, and long hours at work.

vii. His belief system—he's torn between the "shoulds" of the Christian life, and the appeals and "threats" of the other voices from work, his wife, his siblings, and his kids. Somethings and someones speak with an authoritative voice that he's tempted to listen to in God's place!

Cravings and wants, Q3, or (Q5, Q6)
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The fear of man—the expectations of
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his peers, wife, sons, church friends
Fear of failure— letting down his parents, wife, sons; testimony at work and in the church; professionally if he turns down the job offer
Work associates see him as angry, demanding, insensitive, selfish
His love of pleasure shows up in the “refuge” of a new romance, drugs and alcohol
He’s torn between his sense of the “shoulds” of the Christian life and the threats of voices from work, his wife, kids

f. (30:15) There are positive things in Aaron’s life, too (common grace).

- i. His conversion as a teen did give him a sense of mission and purpose.
- ii. His own dad’s poor relationship with him gave him a determination to not repeat the same with his kids.
- iii. He does have regard enough for his church and the pastor to seek counsel.
- iv. He shows genuine interest in youth in the church and is liked by them.
- v. He wants to be faithful with his mother’s needs.
- vi. He knows he and LaToya are not right.

vii. He is a hard worker—though to a fault. But he’s not afraid of hard work.

viii. He still lives with a sense of mission with his music.

4. (31:00) What consequences are spin-offs from his responses to his motives in his situations?

- a. He is unhealthy, fearful of an early death like his dad’s.
- b. He is anxious, fearful, stressed, guilt-ridden.
- c. He is flirting with another woman he met on Facebook and is considering trashing his marriage for her.
- d. He is depressed and thinking of suicide as a way out of his pressures.
- e. He loses his temper with his sons, his wife, and his work associates who aren’t as “perfect” as he thinks he is or as appreciative as they should be of his hard work.
- f. He is fearful that others at church might find out about his drug use.
- g. He is considered to be an angry, impatient, insensitive man at work.
- h. His wife is pressuring for more income.
- i. His sons are embarrassed by him and don’t see him as caring for them.

Consequences, Q4 or Q8
He’s anxious, fearful, stressed, guilt-ridden
He’s unhealthy, fearful of an early death
He’s flirting with another woman and considering trashing his marriage

He's depressed and thinking of suicide
He loses his temper with his sons, wife, work associates; they are disappointed with him and don't see him as caring
He's fearful that church folks could find out about his drugs, etc.
His wife is pressuring him for more income

Aaron does not come with one single troubling issue. His life is a cornucopia, a stew, of many different challenges, questions, frustrations, failures, and successes.

B. (3:05) Where do we begin with Aaron? Several options:

A few general thoughts—not so much a counseling method, but some things to pray for and begin to think about as a way to help him. (We'll actually give more attention to the “how” of “helping people change” and of engaging a person in a later course.)

There are several things to consider as you seek to help Aaron:

1. Listen for the patterns of his motives, his reasons, for doing various things in his past and present. Listen for how he thinks about future decisions, hopes, and fears. Patterns, for example, that show up at work, with his kids, with his wife, with his background in his family.
2. Take stock of what we have in common with him (1 Cor 10:12–13; 2 Cor 1:4; Heb 5:2ff). Is he a “project” or counseling “case” or a fellow sinner? A fellow sinner—we're in this together! One broken pilgrim helping another broken pilgrim.
3. Take stock of the relationship between you and him. Is he already a trusted friend?
  - a. The first question a counselee asks is “Do I trust you?”
  - b. Second question: “Am I going to be honest with you?”

- c. Third: “Will I listen to you?”
    - d. Fourth: “Are we going to work toward a biblical agenda or someone else’s agenda?”
  - 4. Take stock of his assets, not just his weaknesses, liabilities and failures. Affirm him where you are genuinely able. No one is 100% evil all of the time. Especially if he is a believer, there are works of the Spirit in his life. Note them. Commend him for displaying them. For example:
    - a. He is a hard worker and has tried to provide faithfully.
    - b. He is a believer who wants to serve others and is doing so with young people at church.
    - c. He wants to care for his sons and his mother.
    - d. He cares about his Christian values.
    - e. He has sought counsel from his pastor about the conflict at work.
    - f. He’s seeking help now and knows he’s in trouble.
  - 5. Discuss possible starting points with the counselee. Aaron mentioned a number of presenting problems. Ask him where he’d like to begin. Every part is connected to every other part, so wherever you begin with Aaron, there will be natural segues or transitions into other regions of his life to look at and work on. One pattern that emerges in virtually all his relationships is the fear of man. Another is his fear of failure—professionally and in his relationships at home. Another may be his anger at work, at home, with his siblings, his mother and with his own dead father. What does he want to begin to talk about?
- C. (34:46) Student reflections about the model after identifying aspects of Aaron’s life in the chart:
- 1. Can you see how our paradigm helps make sense of Aaron’s life, i.e., gives us a way to relate the different aspects of his life?
  - 2. Can you see any patterns by thinking through his life with these features (four questions of the vicious cycle and four of the gracious cycle)?
  - 3. Can you see how any area he wants to begin to work on can be linked to others? Do you see how, in one sense, it doesn’t matter where you begin with Aaron because all roads lead to the heart?

4. Can you see how a few verses here and there about Christian duties, about specific areas of sin and righteousness, without a heart focus being addressed, will miss the deep changes he needs to make?
5. Can you see how any of Aaron's positive features can be encouragements to him to continue to move forward in faith and love? Does any of this point to what Aaron really *wants* or *desires* in relation to Christ?

D. My fears of outside and inside things, evils that encompass me and iniquities inside me, do not separate me from the mercy, steadfast love and faithfulness of the LORD. This is the assurance that someone like Aaron needs. When the Lord is finished with him, the Lord will take him. There is hope that he can get out of the bog that has him feeling trapped and sinking. Lead him to the cross, one step at a time.

“As for you, O LORD, you will not restrain your mercy from me;  
Your steadfast love and your faithfulness will ever preserve me!

For evils have encompassed me beyond number;  
My iniquities have overtaken me, and I cannot see;  
They are more than the hairs of my head;  
My heart fails me.” (Psa 40:11,12)

### **Conclusion:**

In this lesson we summarized a second helping model—the “Three Trees.” I’ve illustrated it by my Final Four selfishness and shown how to move from the thorn bush to the fruit tree by way of the cross.

We’ve shown how the versions of our helping models relate to our traffic jam anxiousness, anger, or escapism temptations.

Finally, we’ve sketched Aaron’s complicated life and used our models to lay a foundation for trying to enter his life compassionately and helpfully.

In our next lesson, we’ll apply the model to the Shana case study in your workbook, ask whether we should teach this model to people we want to help, and explore more deeply why we move most intentionally to address people’s heart issues to help them change.

## Lesson 5

### Applying The Paradigm With The Heart In View

#### Objectives

Students will:

1. Use the counsel of James in James 3:12–4:12 as a way of reviewing the vicious and gracious cycles and the “Three Trees” metaphor. How does he apply these features of help and counsel to the believers to whom he writes?
2. Apply features of the vicious cycle and gracious cycle to the Shana case study to accentuate the way her heart-loves, her masters, have ruled her actions and had effects upon her and others.
3. Understand the limits of teaching this model in counseling situations. One may think that teaching the model means he has counseled someone. Similarly, someone who has learned the model may think the problem he or she is struggling with is solved. Neither is necessarily true. The paradigm is just a map.
4. Consider the Gary case study as a way to understand how the heart may be addressed without explaining the entire model.
5. Describe the five counseling entry points—using the house metaphor—for a helping relationship. Entry points include God’s Spirit using His Word, God’s providence with friendships, God’s providence with situations, God’s truth in the gospel with its center as a relationship with Christ, and the person himself as an image-bearer of God able to make choices, repent and believe the gospel. These entry points lead to the heart because every part of who we are and our experience interconnects with every other part. Jesus entered people’s lives from many different places. Nevertheless, He led each of them to consider heart issues—the realm of the first great commandment.
6. Contrast the focus on heart matters with our western culture’s emphases on nature (genetic factors) and nurture (environmental, cultural, and social influences) as the source of our troubles, brokenness, and reactions. Focusing on the “heart” as the “cause” of our problems and responses allows people to deflect personal accountability and responsibility.
7. Note that what the world often calls the source of our problem (nature and nurture factors), are really secondary causes of our troubles. These can be significant and influence us (e.g., our biological make-up, family history, tragic abuses, oppression, injustice). But they are not determinative—i.e., they don’t make us react. We choose how to react because of the freedom we have to make choices as those created in God’s image. The key factor that moves me to make my choices and my reactions is a heart factor: what I am doing with the triune God.

8. Acknowledge that the heart is *describable* but not *fully knowable* except to God. *Explanations*, why someone does what he does, may never be fully understood. The description of the heart's loves, though, is a different matter. We can see what we and others love the most, crave, demand, desire, and trust in. This gives people hope for change. They can exchange what they are trusting in for the living God—even if they don't know all the whys and wherefores for their responses or choices.



(Note: minute and second notations throughout the outline correspond approximately to DVD video locations of Mentor Manual related content for this lesson.)

## PART 1 OF LESSON 5

In Part 1 of this lesson you will be using the *Life Facts Chart* in the appendices to see how James makes reference to all the features in our model and then to apply it to the *Shana Case Study*, also in the appendices.

As you consider the different questions and features of the model, in James' and in Shana's story, you will not find a neat outline of heat, thorns, cross, and fruit. In James' case, you may need to skim the earlier and latter parts of his epistle as well to get a sense of the challenges, the heat or situations that face his readers. In Shana's story you may need to supply your own thoughts about how she could move to the gracious cycle since her own use of these truths is thin, as recorded here.

There is not a "right" or "wrong" grade for this. As in any of our conversations to help brothers and sisters, there are many factors and many overlapping concepts. The point of this exercise is to get a sense of the mental map, the patterns James is pointing out for his readers to follow and that Shana is using or is tempted to use in her "heat" situations.

- I. (1:15) James 3:13–4:12: the vicious and gracious cycles illustrated. Using the *Life Facts Chart* in the Appendices, with short one-word or two-word phrases, identify concepts and counsel that James cites. List them in the related columns on the chart.

### A. Vicious cycle

1. (1:57) What is your situation? There are two ways we can face trials (the way James begins his book in 1:2–4)—with "wisdom" from below or "wisdom" from above.

Who is wise and understanding among you? By his good conduct let him show his works in the meekness of wisdom. But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast and be false to the truth. This is not the wisdom that comes down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there will be disorder and every vile practice. But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere. And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace. James 3:13-18

- a. Trials are an occasion for foolish or wise responses. This section points to the two options, earthly or heavenly wisdom. The

situation is potent enough to bring out a wide range of responses that reveals who you are.

2. (4:23) How are you reacting? “Who is wise and understanding among you?” (v.13). There is “earthly, unspiritual, demonic” wisdom (v.15) or that which “comes down from above.” (v.15). You can react with quarreling and conflict (4:1-11).
  - a. “Bitter jealousy (literally, bad zeal) and selfish ambition (a self-exalting quality) in your hearts”(3:14.)
  - b. You blame others (4:1).
  - c. You want what pleases you/your pleasures (4:2).
  - d. These reactions are idolatrous. “You adulterous people!” James accuses (4:4a). This is typical biblical language for the theme of idolatry/false gods.
  - e. These reactions show you are a friend of the world with misplaced affections. “Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God?” (4:4b). The esteem of others is greater than God’s favor.
  - f. Pride. “God opposes the proud” (4:6).
  - g. James tells them to “resist the Devil”(4:7) because of the reality of “demonic wisdom” (3:15).
  - h. “Double-minded” (4:8; 1:6–8). Not clearly committed to doing the will of God.
  - i. Acting as if you are God. “Who are you to judge your neighbor? There is only one law-giver and judge,” and you are not Him (4:11–12).
3. What do you want, demand, crave, expect? What rules your heart? Look at the reactions in the trial and James’ descriptions of them. Consider how they are connected to what one expects or demands or believes.
  - a. I want the attention or position you have (“bitter jealousy and selfish ambition” 3:14).
  - b. You blame others (4:1).
  - c. I want what pleases me or makes me feel good.

(“...pleasures...you desire and do not have...” 4:2).

- d. I have loyalties to gods in my heart. (“You adulterous people!” 4:4a).
- e. I am a “friend of the world” with misplaced affections (4:4b).
- f. I’m “double-minded.” I’m not clearly committed to doing the will of God (1:6–8; 4:8).
- g. I am the judge, the determiner of right and wrong that people do. (“...one lawgiver...judge,” 4:11–12).

4. (7:41) What are the consequences of such reactions?

- a. Murder (4:2).
- b. Adversarial relations (“fight and quarrel” 4:2).
- c. Unanswered prayer (“You do not ask... You ask and do not receive.” 4:2b,3).
- d. You become an enemy of God (4:4).
- e. God opposes you (4:6).

B. (8:50) Gracious cycle of wisdom (living with God’s mind and heart, in your situation)

1. (9:12) Who is God the Father in the situations that face the readers of the book of James? What does God reveal about Himself that is relevant to them and their situation? Are they satisfied with His rule and purpose? What they know about Him?

- a. God is the giver of grace. “He gives more grace” (4:6).
- b. God in His love is jealous for His people. “He yearns jealously over the spirit that He has made to dwell in us” (4:5).
- c. He will draw near to you and exalt you. “Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you... He will exalt you” (4:8, 10).

2. (9:44) Who is the Lord Jesus in this situation and who does He want these people to BE in Him? Are they satisfied with being in Him and enjoying His will? What beliefs and desires should rule you? Who is the Christ that you want to rule over you?

- a. See God as the one to whom you must turn. Asking for help and praying to God acknowledges your dependence, submission, and yieldedness to Him (4:2–3).
  - b. Act in a way that reveals faith in the God who is your totally sufficient resource. Notice the active verbs: submit, draw near, humble yourselves (4:7,8,10).
3. (10:50) What should you DO now by the power of the Spirit? How will you react in this situation?
- a. Consider the many facets of peacemaking—truly wise living (3:17–18). Pray (to “ask” rightly is to abandon your desire to satisfy your own passions and to desire God’s will instead 4:2–3).
  - b. Repent of your fleshly inclinations. “Be wretched and mourn and weep...Humble yourselves before the Lord, and He will exalt you” (4:9–10).
  - c. Trust in His grace (4:6).
4. (11:55) What are the consequences of such godly fruit bearing?
- a. He gives more grace (4:6).
  - b. He will exalt you (4:10).
  - c. You will receive the crown of life (1:12).
  - d. You will sow a harvest of righteousness as one who makes peace (3:18).
- II. (12:43) The Shana case study. Privately or in small groups, use the *Life Facts Chart* and “The Eight Questions” to separate many of the things going on in Shana’s life and to get a sense of what she trusts in. Jot a few notes in your workbook for each question to aid in your class discussion.

A. Shana’s vicious cycle of folly

- 1. Her situation (heat):
- 2. Her responses (thorns):
- 3. Her desires/motives/what rules her (heart portion of thorns):
- 4. The consequences (consequences portion of thorns):

B. Gracious cycle of wisdom (there is not much data here because most of Shana's life is lived in the vicious cycle, but there are a few positive things going on).

1. Who is God in this situation? (God portion of the cross)
2. Who is Christ and what do I want of His purpose and provision in my life? (Christ portion of the cross)
3. What should I now do? (fruit)
4. What outcomes may I expect? (consequences)

### **Questions for Reflection on Part 1**

1. If James' readers applied the "Three Trees" paradigm to their situation and sought godly change, what parts of His counsel fit in each of the four features (heat, thorns, cross, fruit) of the "Three Trees" model?
2. In a small group, answer each of "The Eight Questions" as they pertain to Shana's life. What patterns of her heart's affections seem to be emerging?
3. Identify some of the positive attitudes and behaviors of Shana. What could you refer to in order to give Shana hope that God's goodness has enabled her to make some good choices in the past and that in Christ there is yet more hope for her?

## PART 2 OF LESSON 5 (13:58)

### III. (15:30) Should you teach this model with people you counsel?

- A. Depending on the person you are talking to, teaching the model may be helpful. As you'll see, though, it may be more helpful for you, as the counselor, to understand what is going on in someone's life and how he or she looks at the world. As you are having your conversation, over time, you may refer to features to help clarify where reactions are coming from and how to transition from the vicious to the gracious cycle of God's goodness.
- B. Cautions in sharing the model with the person you are helping:
  - 1. A paradigm, if it is left in the abstract, may give the impression that knowing the model solves something. This can be misleading and unhelpful to your friend. Maps don't get you anywhere.
  - 2. A paradigm, when taught, may tempt you to think you've "counseled" when really you've just taught the paradigm. It's just a map. Maps don't get you anywhere. They just give you a sense of where to go.
- C. (18:14) Case study: Using, but not explicitly teaching, the model.
  - 1. See the Gary Case Study in the Appendices.
  - 2. Use the *Life Facts Chart* in the Appendices to sketch the factors in Gary's life that the counselor identifies.
  - 3. Conclusion: (27:45) In this case study, the model was not explicitly drawn out for the student, but the counselor used it nonetheless. He did several things:
    - a. He listened and gathered information about the "heat" in Gary's situation.
    - b. He listened to detect Gary's reactions, heart desires, and consequences of his reactions.
    - c. He used an illustration from his own life to point out how his heart had displaced Christ with his own desires (idols).
    - d. He gained access to Gary's heart and thinking by drawing the teen's attention to his own heart idol.
    - e. He showed the gospel's relevance to Gary's life in the heat of the battle.

### Questions for Reflection on Part 2

1. When might it be helpful to teach one of the paradigms? When might it be more of an obstacle than a help?
2. Some counseling specialists say you should never share your own personal stories in counseling. What do you think? When might it be helpful and when might it be unhelpful?
3. In the conversation with Gary, what did the counselor do to direct his thinking toward heart issues? What seemed to carry weight with Gary in the conversation?

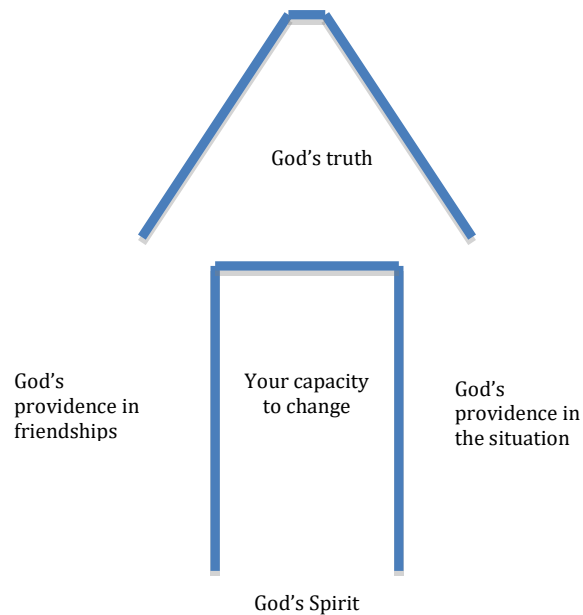
## PART 3 OF LESSON 5

### IV. (29:04) The model and the heart

#### A. (29:30) Why focus on the heart?

1. We focus on the heart, though there are a variety of forces God uses to get to the heart.

##### a. Consider why people change:



- b. Think of the major features of a house as influences God uses to allure our hearts to Himself. His influences are like a foundation, an inside, two sides, and a roof.
- c. Everything in a person's life is significant. Listening is an important part of the helping process.
  - i. God changes you by His Spirit (foundation).
    - He is the Vinedresser (John 15).
    - He disciplines those He loves (Heb 12).
    - He teaches and invites us to come to Him and learn from Him (Matt 11:28-29).



- The Spirit uses His Word to change us (John 14; Rom 10:17; John 8:32; 2 Cor 3).
- ii. Truth changes you (the roof). God’s spoken Word is content that makes a difference.
- Truth saves, teaches, reproves, instructs, equips (2 Tim 3:15–17). It exposes what is wrong and corrects it.
  - Truth has the relationship with God as its transforming goal in every experience of life (Ps 119).<sup>3</sup>
  - Truth has as its center a relationship with Christ, the Living Word (John 14:6).
- iii. Situation twists and turns will change you (one wall).
- Jesus “learned obedience by what He suffered” (Heb 5:8).
  - Jesus used the Psalms in times of suffering (e.g., He quotes Psalm 22:7 in Matthew 27:39–43).
  - “It is good for me that I was afflicted, that I might learn your statutes” (Ps 119:71; cf. v.67).
  - Suffering, even if you caused it, is used for good in the believer (James 1; Rom 5 & 8; 1 Pet 4; 2 Cor 12; Job; Psalms).
  - Trials can teach mercy, hope, and character. Trials can make you bitter or better.
- iv. Wise friends affect/change you (the other wall).
- People influence other people (Prov 13:20; James 5:19–20).
  - Effective witness requires more than leaving a tract on a park bench (though God uses that, too) (Heb 3:12–14).

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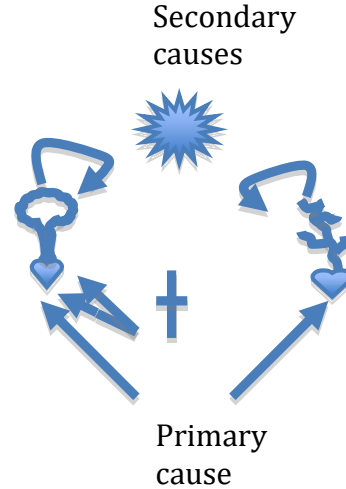
<sup>3</sup> For more on this topic, see David Powlison’s article, “Suffering and Psalm 119” in the *Journal of Biblical Counseling* 22:4.

- v. You, in the center, turn and change. This is active obedience.
    - You are the image-bearing change agent. You make choices, you repent, listen to the Word, submit to God. “Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you” (James 4:8,10).
2. (34:35) We focus on the heart because simply changing thorn bush reactions is not the goal of counseling. What’s crucial varies with each person—but know that you can start anywhere on the map because you can get to the heart from anywhere. (See the Charlotte Case Study in the Appendices.)
  3. (36:59) Often the issue of what motivates how we live (Q3—the wants and loves in our heart that drive us) is the quickest way to make a radical defining contact with people.
    - a. It’s a radically different way from how people think. It grabs people’s attention.
    - b. It’s a point of contact with the culture. (We live in a culture that is obsessed with human experience—the surface relationships, pleasures, and achievements that people pursue.)
      - i. (37:32) Western culture looks at nature and nurture. It’s either the outside world we’re in or what others have made us to be genetically that determine who we are and how we behave.
      - ii. (38:09) For the culture, the “heat” causes your problems.
        - This is true of personality theories, such as need theories.
        - If the culture does recognize the heart as a variable, then it can change without reference to God (as in Cognitive Behavioral Therapy). Self-talk can do it. Just change your thinking. Change is a mechanical or a moral choice (Dr. Phil or Dr. Laura). Interacting with God the Father, the Son and the Spirit (Q5,6,7 in “The Eight Questions”) is absent and unnecessary.
        - The “saviors” in popular counseling approaches become clear as their worldview becomes clear: If your body is messed up, fix your body. If your family messed you up, get re-parented. If your emotions are turbulent, take care of yourself first, etc. If you are in

a relationship that is dysfunctional, get out of it. Changes in external life situations may be needed, for sure. But the need is deeper.

- (43:33) The idea is commonly that nature, your body, loads the gun with genetic predispositions, attitudes, and feelings
- for all sorts of dysfunctional living (for example, *obsessive compulsive disorder*). And, nurture, the cultural influences throughout your life, pulls the trigger and propels you into dysfunctional actions. But, the popular thought is you can change yourself (by mind/thinking choices). In nature and nurture, all responsibility for what's wrong with you lies outside of your choices, and all the power for fixing it lies within your choices.
- (44:25) God has made us in His image as covenantal beings (people who must love something or someone and are committed to something or someone). What *we need* is in reference to Him!
- What we commonly *want* is in reference to our nature and nurture influences. God has placed us in the real world where the living God and the Redeemer steps in. We have been created to relate to God and bring all of our lives into harmony with His purpose—regardless of how nature or nurture have influenced us.
- Therefore, we need to be concerned with all parts of the person's world—nature and nurture features of life. These all contribute to a person's world. We have been created to live out our uniquenesses, first and foremost, in our personal relationship with our Creator and Redeemer.
- Nature and nurture influences may be secondary causes of our responses, but they are still important to listen for as we talk to others. The heart is the first cause. "From the heart flow the springs of life" (Prov 4:23) and from it, Jesus asserted every kind of evil flows (Luke 6:43–45). But these secondary influences are important for how God will deliver us and fashion us into likeness of Christ in real life.

B. Examples of significant secondary influences:



1. A thyroid problem is significant. It's not usually the final explanation for why a person does what he does, but it may be a significant secondary force.

2. (45:53) The motivations to commit suicide come from the person's heart.

a. Biblical examples:

Judas—driven by the failure of or guilt from his agenda.

King Saul—afraid of being tortured.

Jehu—didn't want to die at the hand of a woman (shame).

b. Copycat suicides after Nirvana's Kurt Cobain: despair, nihilistic world systems

c. Terrorist bombings: ideals that drive a person's life

d. Suicide as self-atonement (I'm such a failure. I've blown it so badly!)

e. Desire to get attention

f. Desire to avoid responsibilities (e.g., girl enraged at her father).

g. Solution to problems

V. (47:32) We can talk about the heart, even though it is not fully knowable (Jer 17:9)

A. Only God sees the heart. (We don't see another person's heart. We can't even see our own. We can see fruit/evidences of the heart, however.)

- B. We cannot explain why people make self-destructive choices. Sin is not rational when considered in light of God’s design for life. But God does explain that this is where the allegiance, the cause, of behavior comes from.
  
- C. Why would anyone serve their idols as Jeremiah (Jer 17:5-13) and Isaiah (Isa 44:9–20) assert? It may not be clear. But the fact that they trust their idols is obvious. There is a distinction between description and explanation—helping people to see WHAT they are doing and change their commitment, even if they can’t explain all the reasons WHY they’ve made foolish, hurtful choices in the first place. Insight can be helpful, but it is not necessary for one to move from the broad way of destruction to the narrow way of life, from the way that seems right to a man that leads to death (Prov 14:12) to the way that shines brighter and brighter until full day (Prov 4:18).

### **Questions for Reflection on Part 3**

1. What experiences or influences did the Lord use as entry points into your life to get you thinking about your heart in relation to Him as your Lord and Savior?
  
2. How is the faith required to become a Christian similar to the faith required to pursue godly change?
  
3. The world focuses on heat as the cause of our problems. What have been popular forms of “heat” you’ve heard and seen people in the church use that put their attention on outside conditions or inside conditions that explain their troubles as ultimately “not my fault?”
  
4. While secondary causes don’t “cause” us to make decisions to pursue foolishness, they do often make it easy. Can you think of some secondary causes in your life that make it easy for you to be angry, anxious, want to escape, or be depressed? These could be inside or outside influences. What do they all have in common?

#### **Conclusion:**

In this lesson we’ve applied “The Eight Questions” and “Three Trees” to a case study in the book of James and in the lives of Shana, Gary, a high school student, and Charlotte, a case worker in a Christian agency. We’ve seen that teaching the model itself may be helpful but it is not always necessary, and it may even send some faulty messages if we are not careful to clarify what we’re doing.

We’ve seen that God uses many of our life experiences to bring about a heart focus and that is why we try to move in that direction with this model. This contrasts significantly with our culture’s focus on the heat as the cause of problems. While the heart is the primary determiner of our choices, there are secondary causes to which we need to pay attention. They often contribute serious degrees of heat that people then respond to.

In our next lesson we'll give attention to the importance of vignettes as the workshop where we learn to apply this model to small and larger life problems. You'll also get to reflect on the vignette you've brought to class.

We'll see Dr. David Powlison describe three encounters with his five-year old daughter that apply the model in a situation and show how it can even be used with young children. The heart is the issue for change at every age.

Finally, we will think about the matter of repentance. We'll consider it as a life-long work of God in our lives to lead us, by the gospel, to life-long freedom in Christ.

## Lesson 6

### Applying The Paradigm Tto Vignettes

#### Objectives

Students will:

1. Define and contrast vignettes of simple daily struggles that lay a foundation for bigger concerns. The gospels and epistles handle crises. But they typically come at life's problems from the mundane, such as favoritism, wanting to be greatest, greed.
2. Show how the similarities between the big, attention-getting troubles and the less dramatic ones allow a counselor to begin with the small mundane matters and work toward more troubling matters. Understand that we start with what God brings to our attention and move from there to other troublesome areas.
3. Use a personal vignette with a small group in class and show how the model addresses how change can happen.
4. Explain how Dr. Powlison's daughter's heart was in focus in all three vignettes.
5. Explain how repentance is a change of mind in regard to God, myself, sin, and righteousness in Christ. Believers battle with sin throughout their lives (progressive sanctification) and live, as Luther taught, practicing life-long repentance and life-long growth in grace.

(Note: minute and second notations, throughout the outline, correspond to approximate DVD video locations of related Mentor Manual content for this lesson.)

## **PART 1 OF LESSON 6**

### **I. (1:08) The sample vignette: “Ahhhh. The peacefulness of the park for a Sunday time of meditation!”**

#### **A. Heat:**

1. Enjoying the Lord in the park.
2. An SUV parks behind me.
3. The driver decided to let the truck idle with his windows down and his radio tuned loudly to a popular rock station.

#### **B. Thorns**

1. I’m getting irritated and annoyed.
2. My heart at the moment is not thinking in terms of who God is. Rather, I’m thinking about what I want—a peaceful place with quiet. I’m thinking he has no right to interfere with my solitude.
3. Of course there’s nothing wrong with wanting a peaceful place, is there? But it’s what happens to that “want” in my heart that is the problem.

#### **C. Cross**

1. By the grace of God, I know what is happening inside of me and I begin to reflect on who God is in this situation.
2. I also begin to reflect on who I am in Christ.

#### **D. Fruit**

1. I repent and ask Jesus to make me content with what really matters, and rejoice in Christ.
2. I pray for the man’s spiritual wellbeing and the opportunity to talk to him Him .
3. I’m able to resume my reading with the truck rumbling and not be bothered much by it. Very shortly, though, he puts his SUV in gear,



backs up, and leaves the park. (Presumably, God has done in my life what he He wanted to do using this event.)

II. (6:39) Problems are often alike in kind but different in degree.

- A. Using simple, common events effectively sets the stage for larger, more complex problems. Vignettes are 30 second or two-minute slices of life.
- B. (7:00) Vignettes are examples of starting places with simple, common daily kinds of struggles.
  - 1. Often the popular TV and other counselors of notoriety begin with big troublesome crises.
  - 2. But in the Epistles and in Jesus' modeling ministry, the Bible usually comes at life's problems from the other direction.
  - 3. The Bible does deal with the big stuff (raising someone from the dead, turning a murderer into an apostle, making a major thief into a generous giver, etc.).
  - 4. Typically the epistles and the gospels address everyday sins (favoritism, wanting to be the greatest, greed, selfishness, fears about food and clothing, who we'll pick as our leader, keeping your word, use of money and time, etc.). This is where most of us live.
    - a. 1 Corinthians 10:13 speaks of *common temptations* that God provides help for.
      - i. "No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man."
    - b. The temptations the Corinthians faced were not much different from the idolatry, adultery, and grumbling the Israelites faced in the wilderness 1,400 years earlier (1 Cor 10:6-12). Paul concludes, you aren't much different from those people.
    - c. For example: you may never have been a drug addict, but there have been times when you've eaten a whole bag of potato chips, inhaled a pint of chocolate ice cream, or scarfed down a bag of M & Ms to feel better or get a moment of pleasure or comfort after a difficult conversation or encounter. The drugs and potato chips are a long way apart, yet at the heart level they are close.
  - 5. (11:13) Working with the model in our course begins small, where we are all touched and where we can all relate.

- a. These vignettes are like a young child's puzzle with a few huge pieces. Later you graduate to the 1,000 piece puzzle. If you understand how to do the small puzzles you'll understand how to do the big ones.
  - b. Likewise, when you are having a conversation with a friend, don't hesitate to talk about the "small" troubles first.
  - c. Start with what God brings to your attention that He clearly speaks about and move on from there if other concerns need attention.
6. (12:59) An illustration of starting with what is in front of you:  
"Ted lost his zeal!"
- a. Ted was newly converted while attending a public school. He wanted to attend a Christian school as a senior. It was his idea to transfer to a Christian high school for his senior year. He wanted to learn about the Bible.
  - b. He was very zealous the first months of school. His new-found life in Christ was exciting.
  - c. About noon, one day late in the semester, I met him in the men's room and asked how he was doing—"not too well," he said.
  - d. We went to my office and we talked: his devotions were lacking enthusiasm; he was working to pay for the tuition; his girlfriend was taking up lots of time; the youth group elected him as president and that wasn't going well; he was doing poorly in some classes; school work was piling up; and he wasn't getting but four or five hours of sleep a night.
  - e. He looked exhausted, for good reason. I told him to go home and get sleep—"right now!" I briefly explained the way our body, mind and spiritual matters work together. I got him permission and he left school. We arranged for him to meet me first thing in the morning.
  - f. Next day, he came in and was alive again. He thought I was a miracle worker.
  - g. He did need to work on his priorities, self-discipline, saying "no," and to learn to rest in the sufficiency of Christ more than his

“productivity.” But what he needed, when I first saw him, was sleep.

### **Questions for Reflection on Part 1**

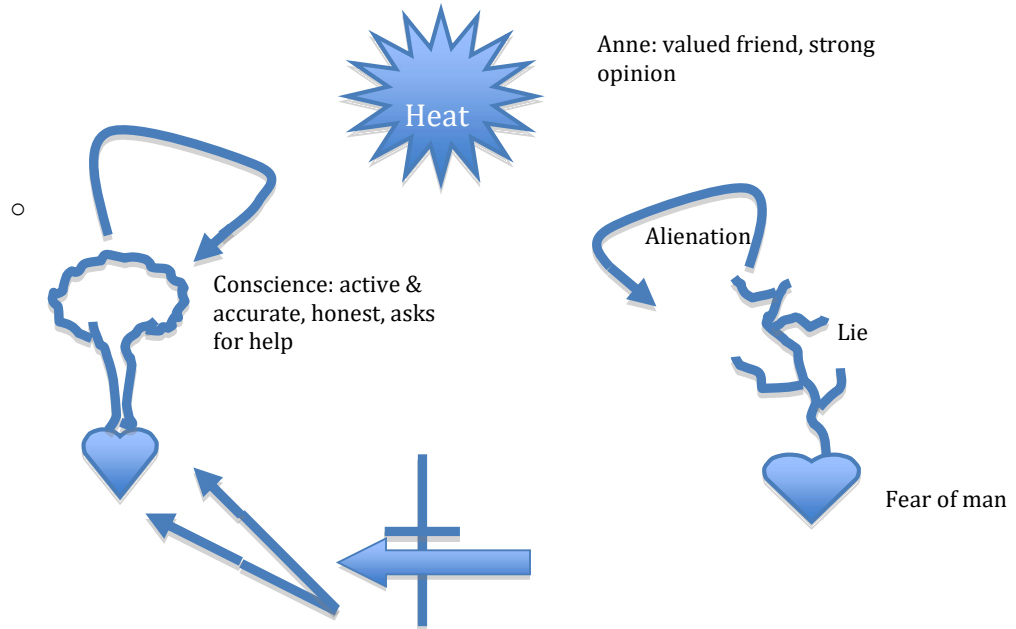
1. Think about my “Ahhh...” vignette. Can you relate the “Eight Questions” to the “Three Trees” format that I used when I shared it with you? What parts of my experience may fit with each of the “Eight Questions.”?
2. Beginning with the small segments of our lives may help us unravel some of the larger challenges we have as well. Allow your mind to run freely with my “Ahhh” vignette. My irritation in that experience could be the tip of the iceberg for a variety of other problems that I need Christ’s help for. What kinds of responses might you listen for if you wanted to help me?
3. Can you think of why Jesus’ dealings with the “big” and, also, very commonly, with the “little” sins can be encouraging to us? What impact should that understanding have on our own walk with the Lord and our helping efforts to our church family?
4. In a small group, share one of the vignettes you brought to class. Your goal is to take the lead and show the group how you applied one of the models.

## PART 2 OF LESSON 6 (15:20)

In this part, you are going to see Dr. David Powlison, the author of this course. These scenes come from the course that Dr. Powlison has taught for the last 30 years at the Christian Counseling and Educational Foundation, Westminster Seminary, and other places around the world.

### I. (16:10) Case Study: Three vignettes of Dr. Powlison's five-year-old daughter Gwen

#### Vignette #1 Gwen and Mueslix cereal

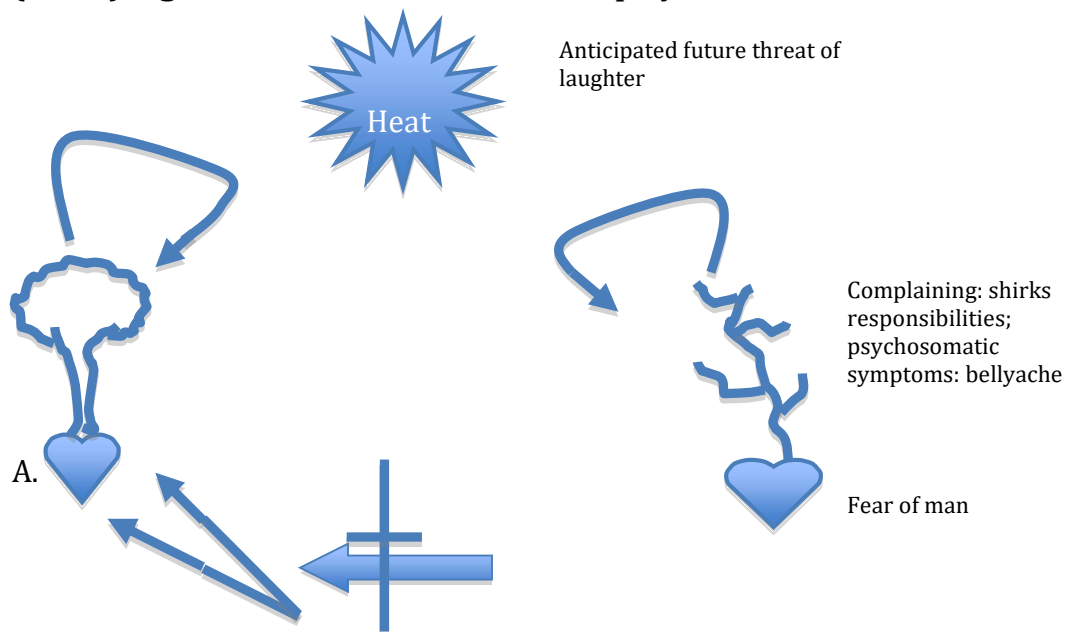


Situation: Gwen is five years old. Dad is eating Mueslix cereal for breakfast. She stops and stares at his cereal bowl. Dad asks, "What's up, Gwen?" She says, "I told a lie."

- A. Dad asks, "What did you say?" She says, "I told Anne I hate Mueslix, but I love Mueslix."
- B. Dad asks, "Tell me more about what happened." Gwen said, "I said, 'I hate Mueslix' because I was afraid she wouldn't like me."  
\*\*Lies occur at the intersection of what is ruling you (heart) and the situation (heat).
- C. The consequence of the lie: she's tied into knots because of possible alienation from her friend if she told the truth.
- D. Her dad responded:

1. First, he noticed good fruit. He saw she was willing to talk about it and see that her lie was wrong. He commended her for it.
2. Then he identified with her. “It’s easy to want others to like you and tell them what they want to hear instead of what is true and right. I’ve felt that pressure too at times—even as an adult.”
3. He gave her a paraphrase of Proverbs 29:25, “The fear of man lays a snare, but whoever trusts in the Lord is safe.” His paraphrase: “When it matters too much what someone thinks about you, it traps you and can hurt you. But when you care about the Lord the most, he He will help you and take care of you; He’ll keep you safe.” This showed that she had the choice and protection in Jesus to do what was right even if others threaten to hurt her. They prayed for forgiveness and for the Lord to help Gwen to care most about what he He wanted in her life, not other people.

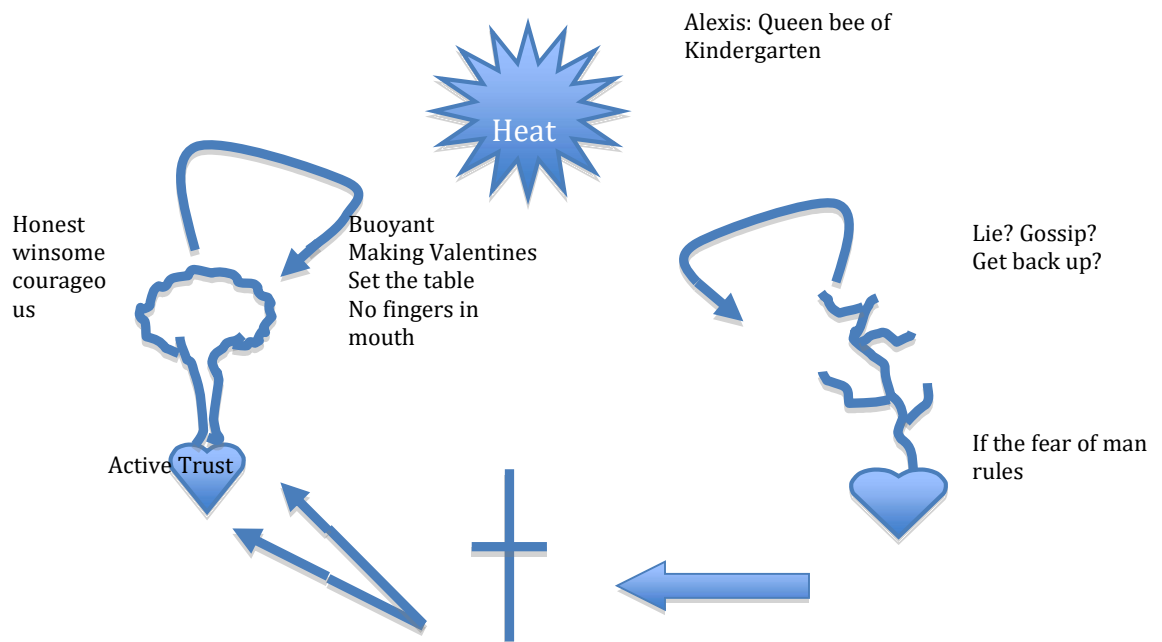
**(35:27) Vignette #2 Gwen and the school play**



- A. A couple of days later Gwen is whining and complaining about being Little Red Riding Hood in the kindergarten school play.
- B. Dad asks, “What’s up, Gwen?” She says, “At the end of the play I (the tallest girl in the class) have to hug Jamie (the shortest girl in the class). Everybody is going to laugh.”

- C. Dad had a repeat conversation from a couple of days ago. “Sometimes people do laugh at us and that hurts our feelings because we care too much what they think instead of what God thinks. Does this sound a little bit like the Muselix talk we had the other day?”
- D. “But there might be another way to look at their laughter,” he said. Then dad offered a reinterpretation of the laughter: “You know how we sometimes laugh when your younger sister does something really cute? We’re not really laughing at her. But at the funny situation. We all enjoy it. The same thing happens in plays. The people will be laughing at the funny situation. You’ll be making lots of people happy. They’re not laughing at you. They are laughing at the funny situation. You will give them a fun time. And you will know that the Lord cares for you at the same time.”
- E. They prayed for help. The audience laughed.

**(43:50) Vignette #3 Jesus is helping Gwen**



A. A week later Gwen was working in her dad’s office. She was buoyant throughout the day, making valentines for her friends. Dad asks, “What’s up? You seem to be having a great day.”

B. “Jesus is helping me. Yesterday in Sunday School, Alexis, the queen bee, said, ‘I hate Anne.’ I said, ‘Well, I like Anne.’ She said to me, ‘Then I hate you, too. You’re stupid.’ I said, ‘I still like Anne.’ Jesus helped me.”

II. (50:09) Let’s talk about these three incidents:

A. All three incidents involved a moral dilemma—“the fear of man.”<sup>4</sup>

B. Reactive behaviors occur at the intersection of a real life situation with the heart. Heart and heart meet. Our hearts affect how we think, act, speak, etc. *We’re always dealing with God.*

Little children, let no one deceive you. Whoever practices righteousness is righteous, as he is righteous. Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil. (1 John 3:7–8)

C. You could use the model for evangelism—i.e., to show a person the need for Christ.

D. The model pictures progressive sanctification (i.e., the process by which our life choices and actions come to reflect the image of God).

E. The issue of *fear of man* affects all of us. Consider Agur, the sage in Proverbs

Two things I ask of you;  
deny them not to me before I die:  
Remove far from me falsehood and lying... (Prov 30:7,8).

F. Postlude:

1. During the teen years...

2. As an adult...

### Questions for Reflection on Part 2

1. What part of the models did Dr. Powlison use as a guide to help his daughter? How did he get to that feature in each vignette?

2. Can evangelism be a part of counseling with this biblical model? How?

3. Change needs to happen throughout the Christian life. Are we ever going to be done with detestable patterns in this life? If not, what’s the use of trying? Explain.

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<sup>4</sup> For more on this topic, see *When People Are Big and God Is Small* by Edward Welch.

## PART 3 OF LESSON 6

III. (54:52) Lifelong repentance and lifelong growth in grace are necessary and normal in the Christian life.

- A. In this life, we never get to the point where we'll not be troubled by sin. Therefore, we'll never get to the point where repentance and faith need not be part of our lives.
- B. *Repentance* can be a scary word. There are many false ideas about it.
- C. The truth is that repentance is one side of the coin of conversion. The other side of the coin is faith.
- D. Literally, repentance means a change of mind. Sorrow for sin may affect people in a number of ways—but godly repentance is Spirit-produced heart sorrow and grief for sin. Faith, on the other hand, is inseparable from godly repentance. While repentance predominantly looks at one's sinful features, faith looks inevitably and with certainty at Christ and the cross. Repentance and faith involve a change of mind, heart, and will that fundamentally includes my thoughts, feelings and commitments about God, myself, my sin, and righteousness in Christ.

My thoughts are changed.

- 1. (56:30) My thoughts change about God: God is holy! (1 John 1:5; Hab 1:13).
- 2. My thoughts change about myself: I'm guilty and can do nothing to earn God's favor (Rom 5:12, 6:23).
- 3. My thoughts change about sin: Sin disgusts me—I want to turn from it. I want to turn from it is because it is against God. It's not just hurtful to me or others. It is opposed to everything my Father wants for me. It sent Jesus to the cross and would condemn me if it were not for His sacrifice (2 Cor 5:21; 1 John 2:1–4). Sin, though I want to turn from it, will be part of me, though forgiven, if I'm in Christ, till I see Him (1 John 3:2–4). This is why repentance (along with faith) will be a way of life for all of a believer's earthly life.
- 4. My thoughts change about righteousness in Christ: Righteous is how God now sees me because Jesus has saved me and puts His righteousness to my account (2 Cor 5:21). I have no righteousness of my own. There is nothing I can do to earn God's favor (Isa 64:6).
  - a. He's making me like His righteous Son (Rom 8:29).



- b. Now God sees me as perfect before Him , because of the blood of Christ that cleanses me from sin (1 John 1:7).
  - c. He’s put His Holy Spirit in me to produce righteousness in me in the here and now (2 Cor 3:18).
- E. (1:00:43) In conclusion, repentance and faith move one to confess and turn from his sins and turn to Christ.

1. (1:00:52) Confession is literally “saying the same thing” about my sin that God says about it (1 John 1:9; Prov 28:13).

Turning FROM sin, then, is a “natural” response to confession. In Romans 6:1–4, Paul asks rhetorical questions to make the point that if I’ve come to Christ for forgiveness of sin, then it would be absurd to keep sinning and not be bothered about it. The “natural” thing would be to hate it, to want to do away with it and live battling it.

2. If we are the children of God and have the hope of seeing Christ and being like him Him , we will “purify” ourselves “as he He is pure” (1 John 3:2–4).
3. Our relationship to Christ changes everything. We have new desires. John strongly affirms that to know Christ means we hate sin and want to turn from practicing it. We aren’t doing something to earn something from Christ. Our new *doings* are the Spirit bearing fruit in us. Notice the Apostle John’s report about the changes that occur in the believer because of his relationship to Christ:

Everyone who makes a practice of sinning also practices lawlessness; sin is lawlessness. You know that he appeared toin order to take away sins, and in him there is no sin. No one who abides in him keeps on sinning; no one who keeps on sinning has either seen him or known him. Little children, let no one deceive you. Whoever practices righteousness is righteous, as he is righteous. Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil. No one born of God makes a practice of sinning, for God’s seed abides in him, and he cannot keep on sinning because he has been born of God. By this it is evident who are the children of God, and who are the children of the devil: whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is the one who does not love his brother. (1 John 3:4–10)

4. Continually turning to Christ, trusting Him alone for my forgiveness (not my tears, not my sorrow, not my regret, not my trembling) is the act of a repentant heart. It is the continual act of the growing Christian in his continual battle with indwelling sin.

For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret, whereas worldly grief produces death (2 Cor 7:10).

My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world. (1 John 2:1-2)

- a. 1 John 2:1 makes it clear, as we saw in Romans 6:1-4, that being forgiven doesn't make one careless about sin. It produces hatred of it and a desire to turn from it.
- b. 1 John 2:1 also affirms that if we do sin, it's covered. We have an advocate with the Father—one who speaks on our behalf, our attorney—Jesus Christ, the righteous one.
- c. 1 John 2:2 underscores what Jesus' sacrifice means: He is the "propitiation"—the sole satisfaction for the Father's just wrath toward us because of our sin. His sacrifice satisfied the Father for us.

- F. (1:06:43) Martin Luther expressed these concepts in a poem.

This life, therefore  
Is not righteousness but growth in righteousness  
Not health but healing,  
Not being but becoming,  
Not rest but exercise.

We are not yet what we shall be,  
But we are growing toward it.  
The process is not yet finished but it is going on.  
This is not the end but it is the road.  
All does not yet gleam in glory but all is being purified.

- G. (1:07:17) The significance of repentance is seen in church history: Consider the beginning of the Reformation. Martin Luther nailed the 95 Theses<sup>5</sup> to the church door at Wittenburg, Germany, on October 31, 1517.

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<sup>5</sup> These 95 statements of biblical teachings were intended to show the errors and weaknesses within the Roman Catholic Church's teachings and practices.

1. The opening note was about progressive lifelong change process. Thesis #1 was, “All life is repentance.”
  2. John Calvin, another reformer, said, “The Christian life is a race of repentance.”
  3. Believers are in the process of change. A life of repentance and faith is the norm for living, not something one does once at conversion and leaves behind.
- H. Teaching the biblical model for change equips the church with the richness of the gospel through repentance and faith. This is the foundation for change throughout life into the likeness of Christ. Biblical counseling is not just getting someone over a troublesome hump or bump in the road. It's equipping people with the gospel for their and others' transformation.

### **Questions For Reflection On Part 3**

1. What is the difference between faith and repentance? What is the same about them?
2. Paul says “worldly grief produces death” (2 Cor 7:10). What does that mean? What are indicators of godly grief versus worldly grief?
3. A repentant heart doesn't look the same way in every believer. What might differences look like? What are the implications of this variety of manifestations for our efforts to help others with their concerns?
4. Church history, like the creeds, can give us perspective that we may lack if we only think and read about contemporary Christian leaders. Are there any trends in today's Christian culture that Luther's and Calvin's perspectives about repentance may give us reason to question? Which ones? Explain.

### **Conclusion:**

In this lesson we've applied the model for how change happens to various vignettes.

We've seen, again, how the model can be in your mind as a helper and will guide your conversations with children and others, but does not need to be taught explicitly to the people you want to help.

We've talked about repentance and shown how the Bible teaches that this is a feature of the entire Christian life and leads people to the Cross—to Christ alone, who is the source of change and salvation. It's why we hold the cross before people who want to see change take place in their lives. Change won't occur without repentance and faith.

In our next lesson, we'll talk about legalism—rule keeping. How does this differ from “Be holy as I am holy”? Any time Christians talk about living their lives with discipline, others may misunderstand and accuse them of being “legalistic.” We'll define these terms and show how the disciplines of godliness are not legalistic but are evidence of the Holy Spirit's work.

## Lesson 7 Faith, Legalism, and Fruit-Bearing

### Objectives

Students will:

1. Understand why it is important for the Christian counselor to be clear about the concept of legalism. Christians may, with ease, fall into a legalistic heart—especially if given instructions about the fruit that the Savior wants us to bear. Our hearts are bent to skip Christ and jump to “doing” fruit-like stuff to correct problems.

2. Show how Christ must be the center point of the change process. The contrast of the magnifying glass and fish-eye lens illustrate the big picture that must be kept in mind to rightly see how change fits with God’s gracious provision for us in Christ. Similarly, a beached whale will suffocate because it needs the ocean context. The huge character changes that go along with “faith working through love,” which God wants for us, will suffocate us without the ocean of God’s grace to us in Christ, our new-creaturely identity, *always* motivating us.

3. Explain what legalism is and is not. It may differ from one who lives more strictly than others or from a church urging strict or disciplined living. It may be a subtle or outright motivation to do something or not do something to gain God’s favor, blessing, or promise. Believers and unbelievers may be legalists. Simply stated, Jesus plus \_\_\_\_\_ (anything we put in the blank) for our approval or acceptance by Him is legalism.

4. Expand on the nature of “abiding,” “sharing,” being “in Christ.” Believers are intimate, thoughtful, reflective, expectant, trusting, empowered, joyful, fruitful and blessed in Christ. There is no “just” believe in the sense of a simple exercise that will substitute for all that is truly contained in the super-loaded term, *faith*.

5. Give illustrations of popular forms of legalism and biblical examples.

6. Clarify that both justification and sanctification are rooted in grace and faith. Legalism—i.e., Christ plus anything—will dismiss Christ and His grace. “The cross is the ground of our justification” and “the cross is the means of our sanctification.”<sup>6</sup> Justification is by faith and is done *for us*. Sanctification is change produced *in and through us* by faith working through love.

7. Show the connection between choices to live righteously or unrighteously and outcomes. Righteous living often results in providential benefits but not always. Unrighteous living usually results in providential loss and pain, but not always. In this life, the godly sometimes suffer and the ungodly sometimes prosper.

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<sup>6</sup> John Stott, *The Cross of Christ* (InterVarsity Press, Downers Grove, IL: 1986), 350.

8. Explain the connection that Paul, Jesus, Solomon, James, and the prophets make between blessing and obedience. Our faithfulness always (at some point) *yields* blessing, but it doesn't *cause* it. Christ's faithfulness does! The farmer's work yields fruit but doesn't cause it. The "increase" is God's domain.

9. Conclude that one's choices are either wise or foolish. Whether choices are wise or foolish cannot be discerned by the apparent success, prosperity, loss, troubles, or suffering that comes as a result of the choices.

(Note: minute and second notations, throughout the outline, correspond to approximate DVD video locations of related Mentor Manual content for this lesson.)

## **PART 1 OF LESSON 7 (1:42)**

### **I. Legalism and counterfeit change**

Christ is the foundation for all change. He is the central figure in “How Change Happens”—but this is contrary to “common” sense. This lesson is to make us alert to that, so that when we counsel we keep faith in Christ clearly in the center of the process of change and avoid counterfeit “wisdom.”

A. Detecting counterfeit money is a task every bank teller is trained to do.

B. Tellers study the real thing intensely.

C. Counterfeits of faith produce “fruit-bearing” that goes under the heading of “legalism.”

D. This lesson is to help you clarify and firm up your foundation of trust in Christ alone to bring about change.

1. Foundations are not pretty or aesthetically appealing. They aren’t built to be seen.
2. They are functional and essential for stability of the structure you build on them.
3. Foundations often involve the most the dirty and labor-intensive work. That is true of counseling too. You have to think hard and wrestle with some difficult temptations and trends in your own heart that are “common to man” (1 Cor 10:13).

### **II. (5:04) Christian counselors and legalists want change...but for different reasons**

#### **A. In general**

1. Biblical counseling is about helping people to change or bear fruit by grace and through faith. God’s destination for us, you recall, is to become like Christ in any and every life situation! (Rom 8:29).

2. (5:21) Legalism is an attempt to bring about change, too, and to earn God’s approval or acceptance—but without trusting Christ for that to happen. Legalism can look like genuine Christian living.

## B. In particular

1. Legalism has to do with “doing:” obeying, producing, sacrificing, serving, etc., as does true Christian living.
2. The heart is the focus of this discussion (just as it has been for the model we’ve been studying and practicing). A legalistic heart does not have the same motives as a heart centered on Christ.
3. The fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22–23 and the virtues Peter describes in 1 Peter 1:5–11 are works of God IN His people that include attitudes, behaviors, and works that Christians DO. “Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, fFor it is God who works in you both to will and to work fordo of his good pleasure” (Phil 2:12–13). Both God’s sovereign, gracious empowerment and our responsible, thankful efforts are involved. Legalism has our efforts in view but with a sense of entitlement, as though our obedience earns God’s blessing or approval. This is a heart issue.
4. Being holy as He is holy is a command for all believers (1 Pet 1:14-16). Holiness has to do with attitudes and behaviors. Legalists may have this as their goal but in order to earn God’s favor.
5. Likeness to Christ is God’s end-plan for His people (Rom 8:29; Phil 1:6). This may be the end-plan for legalists, too. Christians want to be like Christ and can lose sight of how this comes about.
6. It is easy for believers to slip into a legalistic mindset. A vignette:

*Father, I prayed for this but...*

Some months ago, when I was preparing this lesson, I was enjoying the Lord at our mountain cabin where I’ve spent many hours in study and writing.

- a. I had a wonderful time of private worship and prayer that particular day. I had a sense of God’s presence in my praying for TUMI, church leaders I’ve been connecting with in Chester, the region and the world about TUMI, and our TUMI students and future courses.
- b. I also had a wonderful time praying for some needy church family members who had some deep temptations in their marriage relationship. There was such a sense of the Lord’s presence and a sense that God was going to do some remarkable



things in their lives. The balance of the time there was to prepare for teaching about legalism.

- c. The trip home was later that afternoon, and I was rejoicing in the time I had with the Lord at the cabin and the work He enabled me to do. The cell phone rang. It was the husband of the couple I had been praying for. I was ready to hear something of the blessing that they were seeing in their marriage—because of my prayers.
- d. Instead, the husband was angry and bitter toward his wife. He accused her of unfaithfulness, lacing his sentences with abusive, crude, and profane words for her. He said she just packed up and left the house and left him with the kids. He said she drained the checking account of nearly all their money and took the car without saying where she was going or for how long. She just left. He said, “This marriage is over. I’m tired of this.”
- e. What he didn’t say was that he had done the same thing on numerous occasions. In fact, sometimes he’d go out and not return until the next day.
- f. I prayed on the phone. There was not much else at that point I could do. He was angry and in no condition to be “counseled.” He called me to vent.
- g. After he hung up, I was upset. “Lord, what is happening? I have given myself to prayer and work in your Word, to resisting the devil, to serious supplication on behalf of these people, and this happens.”
- h. At that moment, the Lord, by his His Spirit, reminded me about the topic I was studying and preparing to teach—faith vs. legalism. He showed me how easily I, the counselor, the course writer, the teacher and mentor, could slide into legalistic thinking. I had allowed my pride in my prayer time and obedience to shift my trust from Christ and satisfaction with Him and His will, to a sense of entitlement—He should bless me because I.... It was Christ plus my prayerful intercession, my obedience, and my thoughtfulness.
- i. I confessed my sin, affirmed my trust in Christ by submitting to Him and His will, acknowledged that none of my works are righteous or deserving. I am an “unworthy servant” at every point, as Jesus instructed me to say (Luke 17:10). Then I prayed again for the couple, and “not my will but yours be done.”

The conclusion: legalism is an easy posture to slip in to.

C. (11:17) Legalism is Jesus plus \_\_\_\_\_(anything)\_\_\_\_\_ (fill in the blank with anything that is necessary for me to receive God's acceptance or favor). Popular ways to fill in the blank include: obedience, church attendance, dress, speech, devotional time, offerings, confession of my sins, good works, witnessing, etc.

1. This is a serious distortion of the Gospel (Gal 1:6-9; 2:16 & 21; 3:2-3).
2. There are professing Christian denominations that believe faith plus baptism, or faith plus confession, faith plus penance, or faith plus prayers to saints. Trust in Christ is not enough. His work of redemption needs our works to complete it or to nail it down firmly.
3. Legalism disqualifies one as a recipient of grace and the Spirit (Gal 3:10-14).
4. Legalists can become joyless. One can become depressed, unenthusiastic, and exhausted trying to live "Christianly" (Gal 4:15).
5. A legalist is "severed from Christ" and "fallen from grace" as a way of salvation (Gal 5:4,26). If one is coming to Christ for salvation and mixes his faith with any other work that he thinks is necessary, he has shifted from trusting God's grace (Eph 2:8-9) to trusting his own works to contribute to his deliverance.
6. This is a different situation, though it is similar, for one who comes to Christ by faith alone, but begins to trust in his prayers, or devotions, or church attendance, etc. for God's blessing, acceptance, or approval. At the heart level, it becomes the same thing as the person who thinks his works matter for salvation. It is just as "bewitching,"<sup>7</sup> as the unbeliever's faulty "faith." It is a sincere but misleading confidence directed toward what I do, rather than in my satisfaction and trust in Christ.
7. Legalism offers no power in battles with temptation (Rom 7:18-25).
8. Legalists may see themselves or their standards for what a Christian "should" live like as the standard to judge their own or another's state before God. This standard is how he thinks God will bless or punish others (such as Job's counselors and the people James wrote to in James 4:11-12).

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<sup>7</sup> The Apostle Paul calls the concept of putting faith in works "bewitching" in Galatians 3:1.

a. Job’s counselors had a theology that was legalistic: “You do good, you get good. You do evil, you get evil. Job, you are getting evil, therefore, you are doing evil.” Grace was not in their formula at all.

b. James affirmed that when one judges another like that, he puts himself in the place of God! And forgets there is only “one lawgiver” (James 4:11–12). He forgets the grace of God and the struggles with weak faith that we all wrestle with.

D. (18:22) Legalism is the quieter sin.<sup>8</sup>

1. Some human hearts specialize in legalism (e.g., people who struggle with depression, anorexia, cutting disorders trying to earn or be worthy of approval, love, worth, acceptance, respect, etc.). This is a universal tendency. All other religions and gods demand doing something for acceptance, peace, and assurance. Only Christianity says, “You can’t do anything for the acceptance, approval and favor of God.”
2. Legalism is a quiet sin and can go undetected for quite some time
  - a. More “noisy” and visible sins may be anger, covetousness, jealousy, pride, and selfishness.
  - b. Legalismists can take many forms and not be seen as such because this sin can remain hidden or masked. There are:
    - i. Nice legalists—type “A”s; obedient kids; active church members; diligent students
    - ii. Striving legalists—repenting/sacrificing/self-denying” believers seeking to “be holy as he He is holy”.
    - iii. Deal-making legalists—prayer, church attendance, ministry sacrifices to obligate God to bless them such as ; parents who have committed their children to the Lord for salvation, missions, etc.
    - iv. Accepting-punishment legalists—accept “punishment” for sins to make up for carelessness, offensiveness, or hurt to another.

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<sup>8</sup> Much of this section is a summary of Dr. Ed Welch’s lecture “When Guilt Trips Are Religious” at the Christian Counseling and Educational Foundation’s 2012 “Guilt and Shame” national conference.

- v. Resigned legalists—pays for personal sins by forfeiting joy or comfort and living with unhappiness for a long time.

### **Questions For Reflection On Part 1**

1. What makes legalism so attractive to us? What makes it hard to identify in our own lives? In what sense may legalism be a “quieter sin?”?
2. What are some of the legalistic tendencies that you battle with? When is your heart’s inclination to try to earn something from God or be worthy of His love especially strong?
3. Galatians 3:1–3 shows that Christians struggle with the temptation to be legalists. What does this confirm for us about the matter of change in the Christian life?

## PART 2 OF LESSON 7 (24:36)

### III. (23:04) Trusting Christ is the alternative to legalism.

#### A. Faith is not easy to practice.

1. David Powlison notes that there are probably thousands of examples and commands to trust and believe God and His Word. Anything “repeated that many times is probably not that easy to practice.”
2. What does living by faith mean?

#### B. (26:00) The focus must first be on Christ, not the fruit God wants in our lives.

1. Two examples: compare a magnifying glass and fish-eye lens (the first focuses on a single drop of water and the second has a wide angle that shows the rain storm that is coming); consider a beached whale (his weight out of the water causes him to suffocate; in the water, his context, he can breathe freely).
2. Consider the way the apostles wrote the epistles: the first half of most begins with a focus on God’s gracious provision in Christ, and then moves to directions for living in the latter portions.

- a. Galatians 6:14 shows Paul’s confidence in Christ’s work on his behalf:

But far be it from me to boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.

“The victory of Christians therefore consists of entering the victory of Christ and enjoying its benefits.”<sup>9</sup>

- b. 1 Corinthians 2:2:

For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified.

Paul wasn’t interested in any pedigree accomplishments of the Corinthians or in building their confidence in anything or anyone other than Christ.

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<sup>9</sup> Stott, *The Cross of Christ*, 239.

- c. In Romans 6:1–4, Paul affirms that our identity is in Christ. Just as our Father raised Christ from the dead so He raises us to newness of life.

We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.

Even so, Satan is still to be reckoned with: “Although he has been overthrown, he has not yet been eliminated.”<sup>10</sup>

- C. (31:15) The goal of all change is to become more like Christ.

- 1. Romans 8:29 (the broader context of suffering is in 8:18–28).

For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. (Romans 8:29)

He who did not spare his own son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things (Rom 8:32).

John Stott notes there are “triumphalists” (who believe all the promises are to be fully experienced now if one just “believes enough”, and there are “defeatists” who are discouraged because the battle cannot be finally won in the here and now—before Christ returns.

“The tension is part of the Christian dilemma between the ‘already’ and the ‘not yet’. Already the Kingdom of God has been inaugurated and is advancing; ‘not yet’ has it been consummated. ‘Already’ the new age (the age to come) has come, so that we have ‘tasted...the powers of the coming age;’ ‘not yet’ has the old age completely passed away. ‘Already’ we are God’s sons and daughters, and no longer slaves; ‘not yet’ have we entered the glorious freedom of the children of God.

“An overemphasis on the ‘already’ leads to triumphalism, the claim to perfection—either moral (sinlessness) or physical (complete health)—which belongs only to the consummated kingdom, the ‘not yet’.

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<sup>10</sup> Stott, *The Cross of Christ*, 239.

“An overemphasis on the ‘not yet’ leads to defeatism, an acquiescence in continuing evil which is incompatible with the ‘already’ of Christ’s victory.”<sup>11</sup>

## 2. Philippians 1

And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ (1:6)

For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain (1:21).

“Although the work of atonement has been accomplished, He ...intercedes for sinners on the basis of it as our advocate.” (He is not interceding by asking God to accept His sacrifice. That has already been settled and the resurrection assures us of that.)”

But “he always lives to make intercession for them.” (Heb 7:23–25; 1 John 2:1–2). He’s our “advocate.”

“The uniqueness of Christ’s sacrifice does not mean then, that we have no sacrifices to offer, but only that their nature and purpose are different. They are ...not propitiatory but Eucharistic (literally meaning to produce thanksgiving or gratitude). Our works come from our ‘expression of responsive gratitude.’ Not a sense that these entitle me to God’s favor.”<sup>12</sup>

D. (34:36) The way God brings about change and fruit-bearing is by faith, our abiding (John 15:4–11) in Christ. This is the “sharing” (Phil 3:10–11) in Christ that Paul talks about (Phil 3:10–11). It’s the believer’s trusting interaction or transaction with Christ (Gal 3:2). Active faith is the means he uses to move us to greater degrees of likeness to Christ. The process of “abiding,” “sharing,” or “trusting” in him Him for fruit-bearing of all kinds is:

1. Intimate—not formal but open (“Blessed is the man against whom the LORD counts no iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no deceit,” Ps 32:2; see also 1 John 1:7; Prov 28:1,13).
2. Intentional—not accidental but on purpose. This includes initiative to act (Rom 6:14). Identity with Christ must be pursued (see the verbs in Proverbs 2:1-8 for pursuing “wisdom”). (See also “wisdom” in Prov 2:1).
3. Thoughtful—it considers the death and resurrection of Christ and his His activity at the right hand of God (See also the instructions to

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<sup>11</sup> Stott, *The Cross of Christ*, 240.

<sup>12</sup> Stott, *The Cross of Christ*, 263.

“consider...dead ...alive” Rom 6:11–14; “Have this mind among yourselves...” Phil 2:5; cf. Gal 2:20).

4. Reflective—“Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts! And see if there beis any grievous way in me” (Ps 139:23,24). “Declare me innocent from hidden faults” (Ps 19:12). Help me see the disparity between you and me. Use Psalm 119 as a personal way to reflect on tendencies and passions in my old self and longings and hope found in my new self in Christ.<sup>13</sup>
5. Expectant—there is hope because of the Father’s purpose to make me like Christ, to use me for Christ in others, and display me for Christ’s glory to all (2 Cor 3:17–18; Col 1:5).
6. Trusting—this participation or sharing in Christ moves me in faith to be conscious of my own identity in Christ (Gal 2:20), looking at what is not seen (2 Cor 4:6, 18) and esteeming the riches of Christ to be of greater value than the riches of Egypt (Heb 11:26). The believer needs to be trusting in God’s promise of future grace (2 Cor 9:8; Phil 1:6).
7. Empowered by faith —my action/love/service to God’s people and my mortification of my personal sin are moral choices. These come from and are directed by my identity and participation in Christ by faith (Gal 2:20).

I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me (see also Prov 28:1: “bold as a lion.”).

8. Joyful/fruitful/blessed—this participation yields all these *through faithfulness, but not because of faithfulness*. It’s all because of Christ. It’s through the exercise of faith that he empowers us to enjoy his presence and to bear fruit (Ps 21:6; Ps 16:6,11; John 15:10–11; Phil 1:25–26). Notice how Rom 8:1 follows the troublesomeness of sin for the believer in Rom. 7). Consider the kind of people who the psalmist instructs to “Make a joyful noise to the Lord” (Ps 100). Perfect ones or people in process?

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<sup>13</sup> See David Powlison’s article, “Suffering and Psalm 119” in the *Journal of Biblical Counseling* 22:4.



## **Questions for Reflection on Part 2**

1. Is it necessary or wise to expand on the idea of what it means to “trust” or have “faith” in the Father and the Lord Jesus? Shouldn’t telling people to “just” believe be enough? After all, faith is a simple matter, isn’t it?
2. How does the concept of the “already” and the “not yet” help us in our temptation with legalism?

## PART 3 OF LESSON 7

### I. How my obedience is related to faith: attitudes and behaviors matter.

#### A. (42:12) The charge: “They’re legalistic!”

1. Some accuse others of being “legalists” if they are strict in their lifestyle or habits. (e.g., “He has devotions every morning, goes to two church services on Sunday and makes his family do the same thing. He won’t drink wine, and won’t watch TV sports on Sunday, or mow his lawn on Sunday.”)
2. Some say a church or organization is legalistic if it urges specific lifestyle standards for its members. (e.g., “In our church, we don’t think believers should use profanity, drink alcoholic beverages, or have tattoos.”)
3. These people *may* be legalistic, or they may be living more strictly to “discipline themselves for the purpose of godliness,” (1 Tim 4:7) or to live faithfully with a “spirit of power, and love and self control,” (2 Tim 1:7). It’s the heart motive that defines the legalist—not the strictness of one’s living.

#### B. (43:42) Legalism among believers: Legalism is doing any thing, even good and wise things, to earn approval, blessing, or favor from God. (e.g., “Having devotions will make my day go better because God will reward me for my obedience.” “Not drinking alcohol will make me more righteous than others because it pleases God and keeps me from being like the world.” “Tithing pleases God and will cause Him to bless me.”)

1. The Galatians thought that one must keep a law of God (circumcision) along with belief in Christ in order to earn acceptance with God (Gal 2:15–16, 3:1–6, 5:13–15).

We ourselves are Jews by birth and not Gentile sinners; <sup>16</sup> yet we know that a person is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, so we also have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be justified by faith in Christ and not by works of the law, because by works of the law no one will be justified. (Gal 2:15–16)

2. Salvation is by grace and through faith alone (Titus 3:5–6; Eph 2:8–9; Rom 5:8; 2 Cor 5:21; Rom 3:23–25, 27–28).

For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God’s righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. It was to show his

righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus. (Rom 3:23–26)

3. Nothing the believer does or does not do can add to or subtract from God's gracious redemption that he has received. The "no condemnation" of Romans 8:1 follows the Romans 7 struggle this believer has had with the sin he hates.

For I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. Now if I do what I do not want, I agree with the law, that it is good. So now it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me. For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out. For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing. Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me. So I find it to be a law that when I want to do right, evil lies close at hand. For I delight in the law of God, in my inner being, but I see in my members another law waging war against the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members. (Rom 7:15–23)

In other words, Paul was experiencing a battle within himself. He wanted and tried to do good. He tried to defeat sin. There is no mention here of his relationship with Christ, just his wanting and desiring and his effort to do what the law demanded—to keep the rules and standards in his own strength—as a religious duty.

4. He concludes that strength and power to defeat sin come from Christ alone.

Wretched man that I am, who will deliver me from this body of death? he asks. Thanks be to God, through Jesus Christ our Lord! (Rom 7:24).

"Through Jesus Christ our Lord!" It's my relationship with Christ, through being "in Him" that victory occurs.

A few verses later in Chapter 8, Paul says:

If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through the Spirit who dwells in you (Rom 8:11).

If by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For all who are led by the Spirit of God are the sons of God (Rom 8:13–14).

Transformation, holiness, victory in the Christian life, now, is connected exclusively with my relationship to Christ.

C. (46:26) Like justification, sanctification is also rooted in grace and comes through faith—faith working through love. Justification was done for me. Sanctification is done through me. But neither of them is done by my own strength.

1. We do give effort to this matter of change—but Paul describes it as “obedience from the heart.”

But thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed, and, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness. (Rom 6:17–18).

We now want to obey. There is an internal motivation for why the believer does what he he does. This is connected with the new covenant promise for believers today: “I will put my law within them and I will write it on their hearts.” (Jer 31:33; Heb 10:15–16)

2. “Having been set free from sin, [you] have become slaves of righteousness” (Rom 6:18). There is an identifiable connection for why the believer does what he does. It is the new relationship with Christ.
3. “The fruit you get leads to sanctification” (Rom 6:22). There is an inevitable, gracious conclusion to these Spirit-driven godly choices. It’s called fruit. Fruit doesn’t try to grow. It grows because of its connection to a tree or vine.
4. Connection to Christ and fruit-bearing is by faith, not by works.

a. We saw this earlier in Galatians:

O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you? It was before your eyes that Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified. Let me ask you only this: Did you receive the Spirit by works of the law or by hearing with faith? Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh? (Gal 3:1–3).

5. The point of all of this for our counseling ministry is that in any situation of “heat” we are fruit bearers because of our relationship to Christ, which is by faith.

II. (49:02) There is often a clear connection between choices to live righteously or unrighteously and consequences that show up in life experiences—this connection is not one of happenstance but of God’s wise providence.

A. Choices have outcomes.

1. “Good sense wins favor but the way of the treacherous is their ruin” (Prov 13:15).
2. “If you are wise you are wise for yourself; if you scoff, you alone will bear it” (Prov 9:12).
3. “The backslider in heart will be filled with the fruit of his ways, and a good man will be filled with the fruit of his ways” (Prov 14:14).
4. “...being no hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing” (James 1:25).
5. Blessed “are those who hear the word of God and keep it!” (Luke 11:28).

#### B. Outcomes are certain.

God has designed life to function according to His goodness toward all. This is why the laws of nature and moral laws usually bring about pleasantness.

1. All laws of nature and moral laws come from God’s grace. We didn’t come up with these laws through a series of anthropological, evolutionary steps that looked good for society (popular sociological theory). By nature we are “enemies,” “haters,” “fools” who do “not seek God.”
  - a. Galatians 3:2–3 makes it clear that continuing in the Christian life is by the Spirit through faith.
 

Let me ask you only this: Did you receive the Spirit by works of the law or by hearing with faith? Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh?
  - b. Galatians 2:20 also stresses that the “life I live, I live by the faith of the son of God.” Similarly, “The just shall live by faith” (Rom 1:17; Heb 10:38; Gal 3:11; all quoted from Hab 2:4).
  - c. By contrast, the one who lives by their works as their standards for acceptance must “live by them.” All God’s law must be observed perfectly, not just some of it. (Rom 10:5, quoting Lev 18:5).
  - d. The Christian life is one of faith and is “in Christ” (used about 89 times in the New Testament) and “in Him ” (used about 98 times in the New Testament).

2. (50:14) How can Paul, Jesus, Solomon, James, and the prophets say the kinds of things that link blessing to obedience? (Luke 11:28; James 1:22; Rev 1:3; 22:7; Luke 8:21; 1 Cor 9:27)

But he said, “Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and keep it” (Luke 11:28).

“But I discipline my body and keep it under control, lest after preaching to others I myself should be disqualified” (1 Cor 9:27).

“The horse is made ready for the day of battle, but the victory belongs to the Lord” (Prov 21:31). Matthew Henry says of this verse that we need to prepare for the battles we enter and use the means God provides to fight the battle. But we must not depend upon them. Victory comes from the Lord—from our relationship and trust in Christ.

3. (51:03) Faithfulness always (at some point) *yields* blessing! But it doesn’t *cause* it.

a. Think of a farmer who plants, waters, and cultivates his seed. None of that activity *causes* the plant to grow into fruitfulness and a harvest. His work does *yield* fruit and harvest—usually. But not always—because it doesn’t *cause* it. Fruitfulness is God’s gracious gift.

This was Paul’s testimony to the people of Lystra:

God...did not leave himself without witness, for he did good by giving you rains from heaven and fruitful seasons, satisfying your hearts with food and gladness. (Acts 14:16–17)

In other words, God displayed good to you although you didn’t deserve it. He’s the author of all of the good that is produced by us.

b. Believers may suffer and the unrighteous may prosper. Righteousness does not usually result in loss and suffering but sometimes it does (1 Peter 5:10; Heb 10:32–39)—only for a season, though. Even martyrdom may be the fruit of faithfulness (Rev 7:9–11).

c. Unrighteousness does not usually result in prosperity. If it does, it is only for a season (Ps 10; Ps 73).

III. Implications: Don’t interpret God’s providence as a stamp of approval or disapproval. Instead, rely on his His Word.

A. Don’t interpret the wisdom of your choices by outcomes you can see.

The sufferings of this present age are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed in us (Rom 8:18).

For it has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ you should not only believe in him but also suffer for his sake (Phil 1:29).

- B. Don't interpret the prosperity or troubles that come from your decisions as God's approval or disapproval.
1. Righteous acts by believers always yield God's blessing for His people (often in this life and always in the next). Righteous acts by unbelievers often yield blessing (because of God's common grace or general goodness) in this life but never in the next.
  2. Usually the blessing we experience is in ways we understand and feel—but not always. It is always in ways that are *good* for His people as He, a loving Father, plans, ordains, and defines good. Sometimes this blessing is felt immediately and at other times after a period of time has passed. (for example, compare Job 42:10ff “And the Lord restored the fortunes of Job,” with his losses in Prov 1:1,2,8).
  3. Unrighteous acts in this life always yield God's judgment for unbelievers and often God's discipline for believers. This pain is usually in ways we understand and feel loss, but not always. Always, though, loss for believers is only temporal, in this life (think of Ananias and Sapphira in Acts 4; Christians in Corinth in 1 Cor 11). Always, for unbelievers, it is eternal loss (the rich man and Lazarus in Luke 16:19ff; the rich fool in Luke 12:20).

God is gracious and enables His people to produce fruit that blesses them and others—in this life and for eternity. This is by the Spirit through faith in Christ because of the relationship we have with Christ by God's grace.

We cannot manufacture spiritual fruit by our willpower. Nothing we can do can make it happen. Fruit grows on God's vine and on His trees.

In your counsel to yourself and to your friends, keep Christ, the cross, and our death and resurrection in Him as the clear center—not simply the “commitment to do better,” “try harder,” “be more disciplined,” or “do more.” Fruitfulness that yields God's blessing grows on a tree that is rooted in one's relationship with Christ, by faith.

### Questions for Reflection on Part 3

1. Since my behavior doesn't earn my approval or blessing from God, it really doesn't matter how I live. True or False? Explain your answer.
2. If my obedience doesn't earn God's favor or blessing, but I'm rewarded for it, how do I explain the connection between my works and God's blessing?
3. Are all unbelievers legalists? Explain.
4. How can the confidence that God blesses obedience be an encouragement to a struggling believer?

#### **Conclusion:**

In this lesson we've seen that legalism is Jesus plus anything we add to Him to earn our acceptance, growth, or his His smile on us or what we are doing. It emerges from a heart that believes something other than Jesus is necessary for life.

We've seen that God calls us to trust in Christ alone and our identity in him Him. This identity and includes satisfaction with His image, His character and holiness in all my life situations. He always blesses this kind of obedience—often in ways we can enjoy in this life. But sometimes that enjoyment will only be in eternity.

Unbelievers can never take comfort in the blessings of God's goodness unless it leads them to trust in Christ. His goodness toward unbelievers is only for this life and never in eternity. This can lay a wonderful foundation for our counsel to unbelievers to trust Christ and to turn from their own self-centered, legalistic lives.

In our next lesson we'll apply our model to the Philippians believers through the book of Philippians.



## Lesson 8

### **Anxiety And The Model For Change Seen In Philippians**

#### Objectives

In this lesson students will:

1. See how destructive anxiety distorts an accurate view of who God is in the believer's life. All of life is theological. Every decision and response has to do with God. That is no more evident than in this subject of anxiety.
2. See how the Scriptures differentiate and illustrate sinful and righteous anxiety.
3. Explore Paul's treatment of anxiety in Philippians 4:4–9 with "The Eight Questions" model of *How Change Happens*—the vicious and gracious cycles. We'll illustrate this with a case study of a Christian high school girl whose anxious heart found rest by abiding in Christ.

(Note: minute and second notations throughout the outline correspond to DVD video locations of related Mentor Manual content for this lesson.)

## **PART 1 OF LESSON 8**

### I. (1:12) Anxiety introduced

- A. Why does anxiety occupy so much attention in our culture? Someone has said that 95% of life and ministry give occasion for worry or anxiety.
- B. Other labels for anxiety are troubledness, fear, worry, apprehension, concern, or “fretting,” to use the Psalmist’s term in Psalm 37.
- C. One Old Testament scholar paraphrases the fretting concern of the Psalmist as getting all heated up (Derek Kidner). This is like an engine that is overheating because something isn’t lubricating it well or is interfering with its smooth running.
- D. We experience worry or anxiety on a continuum or in a wide range of conditions: from merely being preoccupied and distracted by our worries to consuming panic.
- E. (3:44) Anxiety is linked to the hard things that happen in life—the heat that we’ve talked about in our model. We could link anger, the desire to escape troubles or threats, and many other desires to the “heat.” The “heat” would function as the secondary causes that we’ve talked about. But they are still real influences to be addressed.
- F. (4:25) Is it wrong to want to escape when we feel anxious? It depends:
  - 1. David was clear about his desire to escape/flee and get out of trouble. More than 100 of the Psalms speak of seeking refuge. But *we can escape or want to escape in the wrong ways or for the wrong reasons.*
    - a. Listen to his prayer in Psalm 55. As the Psalm is read, mark the phrases that say or imply that he wants to escape:

Give ear to my prayer, O God, and hide not yourself from my plea for mercy!

Attend to me, and answer me; I am restless in my complaint and I moan, because of the noise of the enemy, because of the oppression of the wicked. For they drop trouble upon me, and in anger they bear a grudge against me.

My heart is in anguish within me; the terrors of death have fallen upon me. Fear and trembling come upon me, and horror overwhelms me.

And I say, 'Oh, that I had wings like a dove! I would fly away and be at rest; yes, I would wander far away; I would lodge in the wilderness; *Selah* I would hurry to find a shelter from the raging wind and tempest.  
(Psalm 55:1-8)

- b. It is unmistakable—David wants to escape. Yet David's confidence and true refuge is in his God, the LORD.

Cast your burden on the LORD, and he will sustain you; he will never permit the righteous to be moved. But you, O God, will cast them down into the pit of destruction; men of blood and treachery shall not live out half their days. But I will trust in you. (verses 22-25)

- c. His confidence, his abiding, his fellowship was with his redeeming Father—the LORD.
- d. David was not the only one who wanted to escape hard things. There were times Jesus and Paul escaped from crowds who wanted to kill them. (See Luke 4:28-30; Acts 9:23-25).

- 2. Similarly, there is a place for righteous anger. Jesus said anger was murder in some cases, but He displayed it Himself at other times. In His conflict with the Jews over healing on the Sabbath, Mark says,

And he looked around at them with anger, grieved at their hardness of heart, and said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." He stretched it out, and his hand was restored. The Pharisees went out and immediately held counsel with the Herodians against him, how to destroy him. (Mark 3:5-6)

- 3. (8:21) The same variations of righteousness or sinfulness can be seen in the matter of worry or anxiety. Anxiety can be a form of love. Or, at the other extreme, it can be a form of madness.
  - a. Timothy was anxious for the Philippians. He uses the same word in 4:6, when he counsels the believers facing hard things to not "be anxious..."

I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon, so that I too may be cheered by news of you. For I have no one like him, who will be genuinely concerned (anxious) for your welfare. (Phil 2:20)

Later in the book, though, he urges them to “not be anxious.”

Do not be anxious (same word) about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. (Phil 4:6)

- b. Paul was anxious over the Corinthian church and other churches:

And, apart from other things, there is the daily pressure on me of my anxiety (same word) for all the churches. (2 Cor 11:28).

- 4. The Christian is not someone who lives in a bubble, unaffected by the things around him or her.
- 5. Jesus is our sensitive model in this area. Jesus was a true man and can “sympathize with our weaknesses.”

For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. (Heb 4:15–16)

- 6. In Gethsemane, it is said of Jesus:

“And taking with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, he began to be sorrowful and troubled” (Matt 26:37).

The word *troubled* means to be in a state of anxiety, to be distressed, upset.

- 7. Jesus’ and the apostles’ experiences contrast with a popular philosophy of that day called stoicism. It’s been around in every generation under different names to different degrees. It means living a detached, unemotionally involved life—especially in regard to suffering.
- 8. In true faith and trust, one is free to be fully human. Humans feel hurts and losses, troubles and uncertainties. But this is not the end or final place for the believer to focus. There is a dimension to this experience

that Jesus, Paul and other believers direct us to. That's what Paul addresses in Philippians.

### **Questions for Response Reflection on Part 1**

1. How can anxiety be healthy and holy?
2. When having a conversation or counseling someone, is there value in showing concern, a measure of anxiousness, for that person? Why or why not?
3. What kind of body language have people shown in your presence that communicated that they cared for you and your concerns? What did others do that communicated that they really weren't all that interested?

## PART 2 OF LESSON 8

II. (14:30) Consider anxiety in Philippians 4:4–9—The vicious cycle  
Using “The Eight Questions,” see how Paul encourages the Philippians to address the variety of conflicting, troubling, oppositional, threatening situations they face:

- A. To begin our observations, note the verse that is at the heart of most discussions about anxiety:

“Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God” (Phil 4:6).

What is the “anything” Paul urges them not to be anxious about? And what is the “everything” that the Philippians are to address with prayer, supplication and thanksgiving?

- B. Note the vicious cycle that Paul and/or the Philippians have to contend with. What are the “anythings” and “everything” that have come to their attention and are inviting a response from them?

1. (15:40) What are he and they facing? There are multiple situations (heat) that give Paul good reasons for uncertainty and, therefore, anxiety.

- a. His life was in jeopardy.

I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel, so that it has become known throughout the whole imperial guard and to all the rest that my imprisonment is for Christ. And most of the brothers, having become confident in the Lord by my imprisonment, are much more bold to speak the word without fear. (Phil 1:12–14)

For I know that through your prayers and the help of the Spirit of Jesus Christ this will turn out for my deliverance, as it is my eager expectation and hope that I will not be at all ashamed, but that with full courage now as always Christ will be honored in my body, whether by life or by death. For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. (Phil 19–21)

Recall Acts 16: Paul’s beating and imprisonment resulted in the advance of the gospel (Philippian jailer and family and Lydia and the church)!

- b. People were out to get him in the church.

Some indeed preach Christ from envy and rivalry, but others from good will. The latter do it out of love, knowing that I am put here for the defense of the gospel. The former proclaim Christ out of rivalryselfish ambition, not sincerely but thinking to afflict me in my imprisonment. What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is proclaimed, and in that I rejoice. (Phil 1:15–18).

Remember: selfish ambition was one of the qualities of “earthly, unspiritual and demonic” wisdom (James 3:15).

Something in the hearts of some leaders produced a spirit of envy and rivalry.

- c. Euodia and Syntyche were in conflict.

I entreat Euodia and I entreat Syntyche to agree in the Lord. Yes, I ask you also, true companion, help these women, who have labored side by side with me in the gospel together with Clement and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the book of life. (Phil 4:2–3 3).

Whatever the issue, Paul’s heart was torn up and the church’s peace was disturbed.

- d. Finances had recently been a challenge.

I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that now at length you have revived your concern for me. You were indeed concerned for me, but you had no opportunity. Not that I am speaking of being in need, for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content. I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. I can do all things through him who strengthens me. Yet it was kind of you to share my trouble. And you Philippians yourselves know that in the beginning of the gospel, when I left Macedonia, no church entered into partnership with me in giving and receiving, except you only. Even in Thessalonica you sent me help for my needs once and again. Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that increases to your credit. I have received full payment, and more. I am well supplied, having received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent, a fragrant offering, a sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God. And my

God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus. (Phil 4:10–19)

- i. Paul had some means of earning income as a tent-maker. But he also had situations of need. “Brought low,” “help,” “hunger,” “trouble,” “need” are terms he uses for his situation.
  - ii. This was not only his situation. The Philippians saw it as their situation. They shared his trouble, and, as partners in his work, they were “concerned.” This is a word with various degrees of intensity. It often means people have something or someone in mind.
- e. There was false teaching in the church. (3:2,3, 18,19).

Look out for the dogs, look out for the evildoers, look out for those who mutilate the flesh. (Paul was warning about teachers in the church who were saying the ceremony of circumcision was necessary, along with faith, for salvation.) For we are the circumcision, who worship by the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh. (Phil 3:2–3)

For many, of whom I have often told you and now tell you even with tears, walk as enemies of the cross of Christ. Their end is destruction, their god is their belly, and they glory in their shame, with minds set on earthly things. (Phil 3:18–19).

The false teachers were having an impact. This both angered him and grieved him.

- f. Epaphroditus nearly died.

I have thought it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus my brother and fellow worker and fellow soldier, and your messenger and minister to my need, for he has been longing for you all and has been distressed because you heard that he was ill. Indeed he was ill, near to death. But God had mercy on him, and not only on him but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow. I am the more eager to send him, therefore, that you may rejoice at seeing him again, and that I may be less anxious. So receive him in the Lord with all joy, and honor such men, for he nearly died for the work of Christ, risking his life to complete what was lacking in your service to me. (Phil 2:25–30)



Epaphroditus was distressed because the church was worried about him and his health. Paul, too, was distressed, because he nearly lost a brother and fellow-worker.

- g. What do you tend to worry about? Identify the “something” that you are worrying about. The “something” is the situation, the heat (Q1). It invites a response from you. Common situations are similar to those Paul brings up:
  - i. Your health or the health of someone you love
  - ii. The state of unbelief or the spiritual or moral condition of a loved one
  - iii. Money matters
  - iv. Relational conflicts
  - v. Weighty or unfulfilled or neglected responsibilities
  - vi. Sins and failures that plague you and seem to be bound to you like a ball and chain
  - vii. Comparing yourself to others, being envious
  - viii. Suffering that keeps going on and on—in you or a loved one
- 2. (25:56) How do Paul and the Philippians react (thorns)? Or, how are they tempted to react? What thorny responses are Paul and the Philippians alert to? How do you express your anxiousness? What thorns are present? What temptations would you be facing? What temptations did Paul likely face? He’s going to zero in on anxiety in chapter 4, but it and other reactions could be listed too.
  - a. Anxiety? Would he have been tempted with worry to the point of distraction because of the uncertainties he faced?
  - b. Escapism? Would he have been tempted to escape? To find some relief somewhere or in something?
  - c. Discouragement? Could he have been tempted to be discouraged because of the rough relationships after such a miraculous beginning of the church?

- d. Anger? Is he tempted to want to be served instead of being servant-minded? He or the church could be crabby, argumentative, defensive toward others who are critical, judgmental, or combative in their attitudes.
  - e. Depression? Self-sufficiency? Is he tempted to not fear the Lord? “There is no God—at least not one who can or will do anything about my situation. No one is in control except me!”
3. (28:06) What are Paul’s and the Philippians’ possible motives, heart desires and demands? (thorns, continued). What voices are they tempted to listen to and heed?
- a. Unbelief? (“There is no god in charge here!”). I may forget and erase God from my situation.

Psalm 10 shows the inner working of the godless person: “all his thoughts are, “There is no god.” (10:4).

If God is erased and is not big, then man becomes big. One of the spin-offs of this is the next possible reaction, a fear of man (Prov 29:25).

- b. Fear of man? (“I’m vulnerable to what others think, say or do.”) If there is no god, people loom large!
  - c. Pride? (“I *must* control things and *can* control things and *will* control things”—maybe at any cost. )
4. (29:51) What are the consequences that emerge when these heart cravings dominate Paul’s or the Philippians’ reactions? When I’ve erased God’s desires from my desires, what happens?
- a. I may become consumed with my desire or the desires of others and get anxious when I may lose what I want and “need” so badly.
  - b. I may push my desires on others by becoming manipulative, or I exploit or take advantage of others.
  - c. I may allow myself to be pushed around by others when I think I can get what I want. Or I may allow myself to be pushed around by others to avoid what I don’t want.

That is the vicious cycle that Paul is aware could begin or continue and that he is trying to move them away from.

## **Questions for Response on Part 2**

1. Go back to the passages concerning Paul's or the Philippians' reactions and identify places where the heart is in view.
2. Why couldn't Paul simply give a list of things to do to the Philippians to straighten out their real or possible wrong responses? What would probably be the long-term outcome of such counsel?

## PART 3 OF LESSON 8 (31:34)

### C. (32:14) More from Philippians: The gracious cycle

1. Who is God in this situation? Who am I submitted to in this situation? Am I satisfied with His rule and sovereign fatherly love? Or am I making God over in my own image and desires? (This is the godly perspective for reconsidering the heat.)

- a. First, “the Lord is at hand” (4:5) and He has purposes. The key to dealing with anxiety is to recognize that God is up to something good.

- b. God pushes Himself into the room and slows down the fear of man, pride, and unbelief, and inserts “His” desires and sense of reality:

And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. (4:7)

- c. He strengthens me in every situation of need:

I can do all things through him who strengthens me. (4:13)

2. (34:38) Who is Jesus in this situation? What significance does it have right now that He is my prophet, priest and king? Am I satisfied with who I am in Christ in this situation? What He wants in my life? The character and trust He wants me to live out? What’s controlling my heart? This is like the motive question in the vicious cycle: What do I want?

Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. (4:5–6)

- a. Paul models a way of relating. He urges reasonable thinking about who God is. He urges them not to be consumed with the way they are tempted to think about their need. Think accurately, soberly!

For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. (Rom 12:3).

They are to let their “reasonableness be known to everyone.” (4:5).

This isn’t just a private conviction.

b. (35:53) He urges prayer and supplication with thanksgiving.

There are two general modes of how you interact with God: joy because needs are met, and thanksgiving because wants are satisfied. The Psalms reflect these two prominent motivations for prayer:

- There are Psalms of utter need and repentance as in Psalms 51 and 103; and Psalms of joy and gratitude such as Psalms 100 and 136.
- Similarly, in 1 Thessalonians 5:16–18 the bookends are joy and the middle is need:

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

- In Proverbs 14:13, Solomon acknowledges that life is a mix of experience:

Even in laughter the heart may ache, and the end of joy may be grief.”joy may end in grief.

- (36:58) But trust is the common denominator. The book of Philippians expresses both need and joy. The Lord is up to something good in me. That’s why I can pray *with thanksgiving*. Faith operates in the major and minor keys—in every kind of situation. Consider Psalm 88 and Psalm 100.

c. “With thanksgiving.” This is the difference between the prayers of an anxious person and the prayers of a peaceful person. Thanksgiving is satisfaction with God, His love, his His providence. This is where the cross takes center stage!

(39:05) Case Study: The power of submission to produce God’s peace:

## **Sherrie—"I've been used!"**

(This is not being given to you as a full script of our interaction, nor is it intended to be a model of "how to counsel" or how to proceed with mandatory reporting for such offenses. Having a trusting relationship and following legal processes are being assumed. I'm using this real life example to illustrate the power of the cross—the power of submitting to Christ's redeeming love. Not every thing is said here that was said in our conversations. Also, please keep in mind that this is not intended to minimize the seriousness of the trauma this young woman experienced, or trivialize it by just quoting a Bible verse. (We met for a season after this initial time together to work through other challenges connected with her story.)

\* When I was a school counselor in a Christian school, I also taught Bible classes to high school students. We'd been dealing with marriage and talking about how our experiences help us develop patterns of thinking and reacting that carry over into our marriages.

\* One day, after class, a young lady, a senior, came to my office and asked me if she could talk. She seemed very serious and sad. We had had a very good friendship for several years at the school. I had had her in a previous class as well. She came into my office and plopped into a chair beside my desk and began staring at the floor. I did what wise counselors do at a time like that—kept my mouth shut and waited. Some of our best counseling is done when we are quiet. (Think about Job's counselors—they were most helpful when they said nothing. It's when they began to speak that they made matters worse for Job and for themselves.)

\*After some minutes Sherry (not her real name), still staring at the floor, said, "I've been used."

\* She was silent some more. Still staring at the floor. After a few moments she began pouring out her story:

\* **HEAT:** She had been at a cousin's house for a birthday party with her family. They had a swimming pool. When they arrived, she went up to one of the bedrooms to change. She no sooner got her clothes off, than her 16 year-old cousin sprang out of the closet and grabbed her and raped her.

\***Thorns:** That was about 5 years ago when was in 7<sup>th</sup> grade. He threatened her to keep her quiet. She said she had never told anyone about this since it had happened but that what I was talking about in class, about our experiences affecting us in the future, made her want to talk about this now because she knew it had affected her all these years. She hadn't slept through the night without nightmares one night since then. She never

accepted a date invitation to anything (though she was attractive and outgoing).

\* **Cross:** I asked her to turn to Philippians 4:6,7 and read it for me. She read it and looked up at me and said, "But I've done that for five years. I've prayed and prayed for God to take this away but he hasn't!"

\* I asked her if she knew I cared for her and wouldn't do anything to hurt her. She said yes, that's why she came to me. Then I said I was going to ask her to look at that verse once more and tell me if there was anything else there that she hasn't done that she didn't see the first time.

\*She read it and said, "thanksgiving?"

\*I explained that Paul wasn't saying to thank God for evil that is done by people. It is truly evil. And what was done to her was evil and wicked and inexcusable on her cousin's part. But, I asked her, in what sense can a Christian thank God when evil does invade their lives?

\* She thought about this and said, "Well, he's in charge, though I don't understand why he'd let this happen. He won't let me be alone. He can use evil stuff for good. He still has me as his child. He still has a life for me, though sometimes I don't think so.

\* I asked her, "Sherry, have you ever thanked God for the fact that he is in charge and loves you and will use this and every other evil thing that comes into your life for your good and his glory? That he is a wise God and loving Father who cares about you no matter how it feels or looks at any moment? That he is good and showed that especially by allowing his Son to be abused and die for us.

\* She looked at me and said, in all seriousness and humility, "It never occurred to me."

\* I urged her to go home that evening, kneel beside her bed and open her Bible to this passage and read it and think about it and then pray but also thank God for his Fatherly love and care and purpose in her life, even with this horrible event five years ago, because of what Jesus did for her. Because Jesus' sacrifice was for her life now and for eternity.

\*The next day she was standing at my door when I arrived at my office. She said, Dr. Horne, you won't believe what happened. I went home and did what you said and I slept all night for the first time in 5 years."

\*We continued to meet to talk about a number of the other effects of this experience. A month or so later, there was an announcement about the

school prom. She had never been out on a date with any guy because of her fears. A guy asked her and we talked about it and she chose to go.

\*The Monday after the prom weekend, I got to my office and a note was folded and slid under my door. "Dr. Horne, I could go up and give God a great big hug. The prom was great. I had a wonderful time. The Lord has taken something from me that I thought I'd never be free from."

Postscript: She went on to college, married, has three kids, and the family is active in a strong evangelical church.

It's the cross that made the difference. Satisfaction with and submission to God's loving, preserving, eternal care in Christ.

3. **Fruit** (46:05) How should Paul and the Philippians respond? What fruit of the Spirit should the Philippians bear as an outgrowth of their trust in their Father and Savior?

a. Devote time to pray: ask for something. Paul notes both prayer and supplication.

i. Supplication has to do with specificity: Let your requests be specific, focused, purposeful. This is an example of supplication. The psalmist pleads:

To you, O LORD, I call; my rock, be not deaf to me, lest, if you be silent to me, I become like those who go down to the pit.

Hear the voice of my pleas for mercy, when I cry to you for help, when I lift up my hands toward your most holy sanctuary. (Ps 28:1-2)

This is intensity. Seriousness. Focus. Express yourself like this.

b. Pray aloud to a person who cares about you. This is a biblical pattern. One can pray in any posture and manner, of course, but there is something to say for praying aloud. David "called" to God. He raised his "voice" and "cried" for help.

Anxiety is like a spin cycle inside your head. It's like the hard drive that just keeps whirring, but doesn't ever stop and display the data or program you want. Praying aloud helps you concentrate and speak to God above the "whirring" noise in your head.



- c. Pray with thanksgiving—that is, with your submission and satisfaction with God’s good, wise, loving, care in Christ. You will experience wonderful and joyous communion when you meet your Father in prayer.
- d. “Think about these things.” Where do you park your mind? What do you think about?

Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. (Phil 4:8)

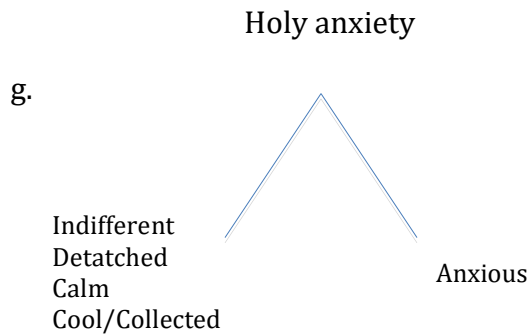
- e. “Practice these things.”

What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me—practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you. (Phil 4:9)

- i. Paul tackles a life that is filled with problems. His focus is on practicing faith and trust in present situations.
- ii. This is a call to tackle an anxiety-producing world with faith.

Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble. (Matt 6:34)

- iii. Detect right and wrong anxiety. Ask, “Which anxieties hinder my love for God and others, and which are nudge me on to faith working through love?”
- f. (51:10) There are two abysses to avoid on either side of holy anxiety: Indifference, on the one side. And distracting anxiety on the other.
  - i. Holy anxiety recognizes that I am responsible to practice my faith by loving God and others. But results, the way others respond, and even my limitations, are all in God’s hands—not mine.



ii. Paul notes Timothy’s holy anxiety in Philippians 2:20. It was motivated out of the love he had for them. “I have no one who like him, who will be genuinely concerned anxious for your welfare.”

iii. He mentioned his own anxiety for Epaphroditus in Philippians 2:26–28.

iv. Paul noted his deep concern for the Corinthians and other churches. “And, apart from other things, there is the daily pressure on me of my anxiety for all the churches” (2 Cor 11:28).

This led him to pray for them, visit them, teach them, sacrifice for them, and suffer for them.

v. Calvin said, “God’s redemption of us is the redemption of our humanity, not some detached plastic saint.”

vi. Emotions can be horribly tainted by sin and wonderfully redeemed by Christ.

4. (53:50) What are the consequences of this fruitful, Father-trusted, Christ-centered, Spirit-dependent behavior? (The fruitful tree)

a. One consequence is joy. We are given reasons for joy throughout Philippians (e.g., God’s mercies, power, love, hope). It’s one of the key words in Philippians. There are well-founded reasons for gratitude. In Philippians 4:4 he says, “rejoice in the Lord always; and again I will say, Rejoice.”

b. God hears your requests and so you are urged to pray. Your prayers matter to God (Phil 4:6).

- c. God is the giver of peace. He's the God of peace (Phil 4:7,9). (See also Num 6:24).
- d. The God of peace will be with you (Phil 4:9). He will never leave you or forsake you.
- e. There will be a different focus on what you think about (Phil 4:8). There is pleasure in this kind of righteous thinking!

“This blessing has fallen to me, that I have kept your precepts” (Ps 119:56).

“At your right hand there are pleasures forevermore” (Ps 16:11).

- f. You will be taught by God! God is a teacher (Phil 4:11–12). Paul concludes that by dependence on Christ, he has learned to be content in whatever state. Teachability is clearly one of the outcomes of the gracious cycle. Proverbs 12:1 says, “He who hates reproof is stupid.”

### **Questions for Response to Reflection on Part 3**

1. Share a time when the “peace of God” did take over your heart in a trial. What can you describe about your trust in your Father and the Lord Jesus at that time?
2. What does the reoccurrence of anxious thoughts tell you about repentance and faith and this model? Is this model a once-and-done panacea (cure-all)?
3. What makes the difference between holy and sinful anxiety? How can you tell the difference in your life?

#### **Conclusion:**

In this lesson we've seen that there is a good, righteous anxiety and a destructive, sinful kind of anxiety. We've followed Paul's teaching about anxiety in the book of Philippians as he's counseled the church of Philippi about the temptations in their situations.

We've applied “The Eight Questions” of the vicious and gracious cycles to the experience and counsel that Paul offered. We've seen again that the heart and the power of the cross come into clear focus so the child of God can enjoy “peace that surpasses understanding” even in the most horrible and wicked situations.

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## **Appendix A**

### **Shana Case Study**

Shana is a Christian. Like all of us, her life is a cornucopia, a stew of many different challenges, questions, frustrations, failures, and successes. She doesn't come with one single troubling issue. Shana approached you and asked if she could meet with you because she is feeling quite anxious and has some issues in her life she needs to "work" on. You set up several appointments with her, yet she continually cancels and reschedules due to her busy schedule. When you finally are able to meet with her, you are able, at first glance, to know a bit about her. She is still wearing her uniform from her part-time job as a server at the Olive Garden. The picture on her smart phone is of two smiling preschoolers, and she wears a ring on her left ring finger.

Shana tells you she is in her late twenties and has been married for nearly 8 years. She describes the past 8 years as the hardest ones of her life. While attractive and well put together, you get the sense that her looks are not the most important thing in her life. She is friendly and caring. You quickly realize that you have to work hard to continue to keep the conversation about her because she asks questions about *your* life! As you spend some time getting to know Shana, some consistent themes begin to emerge. She indicates that she is "struggling," feeling very nervous and on edge. It seems that she feels unsteady and life is difficult for her: she feels "anxious all of the time." She seems embarrassed and confused about her emotions.

Shana starts to share more about her marriage to Lee. It did not get off to a stellar start, and has spiraled downward over the last five years. She thought that when she became a Christian, Lee might take an interest in faith as well, but he became even more involved in work and coaching a boy's' basketball league in town. He is rarely home. They have tried temporary separations. She has gone to her mom's house (she never knew her biological dad) and stayed with her for short periods after increasingly angry arguments with Lee. In their last argument, Lee kept screaming and cursing at her. Shana was so upset and shaken that she packed up the kids and went to her mom's. The emotional pain Lee inflicts can be excruciating, and yet Shana wonders if her response is appropriate to the offense. She reacts violently or runs away...sometimes she wonders if she deserves to be treated that way. Even as she talks about the latest incident with you, she begins to backtrack and wonders if she may have exaggerated the entire argument.

As you talk, Shana's angry side emerges. She easily points out Lee's many faults (in her eyes) and sarcastically begins to build a strong case against him, which moves her to consider divorce. She tells you she either tells him off or retreats in silence because she does not know which one is more "biblical." There are times when she can be so short-tempered with her customers that her boss has told her to take a breather and get some air. Her mom and sister often tell her that she needs to "chill out" and not take things so seriously.

As you continue to peel back the layers, you realize the power Shana's emotions have over her life. She often experiences hopelessness and despair over her inability to

control her anger. “Once I unleash this part of myself, there is no going back,” she says. “It feels as though a switch goes off inside and I am unable to flip it to the off position.” The anxiety that used to creep around the borders of her mind is lately in the front and center position. She fears that something will happen to her family like a terrible car crash or that her children will be hurt or kidnapped in daycare. She fears spilling hot soup on a customer, getting sued, and losing everything. She wonders if her husband is addicted to drugs, gambling, or pornography. She has experienced a few panic attacks over the last year and they made her question her own sanity.

Shana does experience periods of great joy and pleasure. The moment her children spot her in daycare and come running up to her, Shana’s heart melts with happiness, sometimes drowning the negative emotions for a time. There have been times on her job when she has bent over backwards to make the diner’s experience a pleasurable one, and the customers have responded in gratitude with a generous tip and have told the manager what a great job she has done! The manager’s praise fills Shana with pride and gratitude. She and her husband Lee love jazz and on occasion go to a club and bond over a great rendition of Coltrane’s *Love Supreme*, which can feel almost spiritual for Shana. Nights such as those often carried her through dark times—holding the joy and contentment with her as long as she can. She and Lee can experience an intense and satisfying sexual relationship, but she admits it is difficult to be intimate when someone is cursing at you or ignoring you all day.

Shana loves sweets. When the pressure is on, any kind of chocolate will do (in large quantities). But since she does not want to gain weight she will resort to calorie counting and restricting after a lengthy binge. She has at times attended Zumba class and it helps her feel better—less anxious and happier. But this provides temporary relief. Shana has tried other strategies, too. She saw an acupuncturist for her nerves and the acupuncturist encouraged Shana to heal with whole foods. This helped for a while, but working at the restaurant, it is hard to resist the free food. At another point, her internist prescribed Shana an anti-anxiety medication. The side effects were difficult to adjust to and her mom pressured her to go off of it. No matter what she has tried, any sense of wellbeing eventually fades and the emotions come rushing back.

Shana’s work as a server can be rewarding, yet she does not want to do this long term. She has a secret desire to become a fashion designer. She attended a semester at Fashion Institute IT, but had to drop out due to finances. She never misses an episode of Project Runway and always laments that she could do it better than any of the designers on the show. Her sewing room in her home has half-started projects. Her friends encourage her to start a business because she has done tailoring and made some clothes for friends with great success. She insists that if she did it for a living she would lose her love for it, but she wonders sometimes.

Shana is involved in a good church family. She responds well to the pastor’s sermon. One of her favorite verses is “God is my refuge and my strength, a very present help in times of trouble.” This has soothed her in rocky times with Lee. However, when she makes mistakes, she believes God is angry with her and sick of having to listen to her. She often

feels guilty and ashamed of how she has “let God down.” Shana will often worry, “Shouldn’t I be farther along in my walk with Hhim by now?” She started going to the Women’s Bible Study and enjoyed being with the other women, but never seemed to be able to get beyond superficial chitchat. The pastor preached that relationships are built while serving, so she signed up to serve on lots of committees, but she got burnt out and began to resent the fact that no one ever reached out to her or her family.

Shana devours romance novels whenever she has a free moment—on her breaks at work, on the bus, before bed. These novels feed her daydreams about a man coming into the restaurant where she works. He is tall, dark, handsome, and exceedingly wealthy. He leaves her a big tip and is waiting for her after her shift. Shana calls this her “fantasy release” with a guilty smile. These fantasies are beginning to eek their way into her reality as there is a deacon in her church that Shana fantasizes about. She tries to be sure she is sitting near him for communion. One other distressing escape fantasy in Shana’s life is her thoughts of suicide. Sometimes she thinks of it as a way to get even with Lee. Other times she thinks it a way to get attention or even end the struggle and unhappiness. Like sex and romance, these fantasies engender hope, but also guilt—which certainly feeds the cycle of discouragement. This fantasy life expresses well her mixed feelings of pleasure and guilt.

When it comes to parenting, Shana works hard to be a good mom. She often feels, however, that she has to be both mother and father because Lee is not always reliable. This breaks her heart because one of the reasons she stays with Lee is that she knows what it is like to grow up without a father around. But when she thinks about the poor role model he is for the kids, she goes back to the idea of divorce.

Finally, Shana’s culture has a strong influence in her life. Most of her girlfriends are single mothers with no men in their lives. Shana worries Lee will leave her and she will be just like them and her mother. While her mother did not support her marriage to Lee, now she often tells Shana to be glad that her man is willing to stay: “If you have to put up with some cursing and some occasional pushing, so what? At least he is there.” Shana is so confused. Lee’s behavior is strictly against what she is learning in church, and her mother, who has been in the church since she was a child, tells her she should suffer as Christ suffered. Would Jesus want her to be treated in this way? If so, she is not sure she wants to follow a God who would subject her to this kind of treatment.

There you have it—a view of Shana’s world after getting to know her and listening to her for a while. She initially comes and says she is insecure and anxious, but as you kept listening, you were exposed to a complex array of influences and experiences—sometimes competing and contradicting one another.

Karen Shannon (MA) is a biblical counselor in New Jersey. Karen brought together the features of Shana’s life into this case study for the purposes of this course.

## Appendix B

### Life Facts Chart

Directions: Fill in the chart with data from a case study. Answer each question by putting yourself in your friend's shoes to give yourself a sense of his mental map, his experiences, and where his heart and the cross appear to be in his life.

<b>Heat (Q1)</b>	<b>Thorns (Q2,3,4)</b>	<b>Cross (Q5,6)</b>	<b>Fruit (Q7,8)</b>
What's my situation?	How am I reacting to the heat?  What do I want/demand/"need"?  Actual and likely consequences:	What do I know about who God is in my situation? Am I satisfied with who He is?  Who am I in Christ in the situation? Am I satisfied with that identity in Him?	What should I do, by the power of the Spirit, in the situation?  Actual and possible consequences:



## Appendix C

### Aaron Case Study Case Study for Lesson 5

Aaron is a composite of many counselees. He provides a realistic picture of many in our churches. He's not coming with one single troubling issue. His life is a cornucopia, a stew of many different challenges, questions, frustrations, failures, and successes. And he's a Christian. Can you help him?

Karen Shannon, a biblical counselor, has brought together the features of Aaron's life. Her description of Aaron will give pastoral counseling students the opportunity to explore how the gospel may come to life in troubled people in our churches.

#### **Your Assignment:**

In paragraph form, address the following questions:

How would you categorize what you have read about Aaron? What explains him?

If his pastor asked you to explain what is going on with Aaron, ***how would you answer in 50 words or less?***

If God brought Aaron into your life asking for help, where would you start? What would you aim for, pray for, discuss?

#### **Aaron**

Aaron is 35 years old, married with two children. He works as a music producer in the Bronx, NY. Aaron is 5'8", weighs 280 pounds and admits he is a bit clumsy. When you meet Aaron, you are immediately drawn to him. He is friendly, outgoing, and tells great stories. He serves in the music ministry at a Bible believing church where he attends Bible studies and tithes regularly.

However, Aaron's life seems to be spiraling out of his control. He has come to you for help because he can no longer manage on his own and feels trapped. He is nervous and jumpy and snaps at his wife and children over very minor incidences. He and his wife are barely on speaking terms, and he cannot remember the last time they were intimate. As a result of the job, he works long evening hours, and has free time in the mornings while his wife, a nurse, is at work. He used to spend time helping around the house, but lately he is ashamed to admit that he has been texting with a woman he met on Facebook. It started innocently enough, but they have been sharing very intimate information with one another, and he is very tempted to go and see her for a long weekend.

After an almost 5 year hiatus, Aaron has gone back to smoking weed regularly. Although he feels very guilty about it, he says, "It is the only way I am staying alive right now." He is nervous all of the time, living in the tension of being in church and hearing the right thing to do and realizing he is missing the mark by a long shot. The fact that he is living a secret world is beginning to create incredible inner turmoil.

The pressure of his job as a music producer is also a current stressor. At first, the world of music producing was very exciting. He imagined himself meeting famous Christian artists and having a hand in bringing their music to a wider audience, presenting the gospel to those who may not have heard it before. He quickly found out it was not all he hoped it would be. He works long hours. He is a perfectionist and this exhausts him. His body is starting to show signs of stress. He recently experienced mild flutters in his heart, and is winded easily if he goes up a flight of stairs. His last trip to the doctor revealed that his insulin levels were off. This could be an indicator of diabetes, which runs in his family. His dad had diabetes and died at age 48. Aaron's weight has been a source of embarrassment and shame for many years. He knows he should watch his diet and exercise more, but dinner time over a sound board is the norm these days, and take-out is much easier than asking his wife to prepare meals for him to take with him.

Things at home are equally difficult. His children, two boys ages 11 and 8, are transitioning to the teen years and he is afraid he barely knows them. His long hours in the studio make it difficult to be part of their lives, although he tries to make their basketball and soccer games as frequently as he can.

His wife, LaToya, reports to be a Christian, but is very driven. She has gone through two undergraduate and one graduate program, determined to achieve the highest status she can as a nurse. She pushes Aaron all of the time to make more money for a bigger home, a new car, designer shoes and purses, anything that conveys her status to the world. She can be nagging and mean-spirited, drifting between putting him down because he is not at home with the family to practically pushing him out the door to take on more work. He can never seem to please her so he has nearly given up. He tries to avoid conflict with LaToya at any cost. He will say yes to almost anything to get her "off his case."

His mom—alone since his dad died—is beginning to show signs of early dementia. His siblings, a brother and sister, look to Aaron for guidance and financial support because they are struggling financially as well.

On top of it all, what looked like a great opportunity is now an additional layer of stress for him. The label he was working for asked him to participate in the production of a secular music album. It is for an up and coming artist and is a chance for Aaron to earn a lot of money, fame and status. However, the music this artist creates is vulgar, demeaning against to women, and clashes with his faith. He is wrestling with what to do in this situation. His friends think it is "cool" that he is in the music industry, but his mom (and, while he was alive, his dad), and at times his wife, push for him to go to college. He wonders if he should just go ahead and do that.

Aaron is gripped by fear and anxiety about the future. What if I get diabetes and it affects my ability to work? What if I die early like my dad? Will my family be glad to be rid of me? Have I put away enough money for them to be taken care of? Should I pursue this new relationship and just give up on my marriage? How can I get my siblings to work together to care for our mother? What if someone in the church finds out about this

online romance and my weed use...can I face this humiliation and shame? What will happen to my job if I turn down this opportunity to work on this secular album?

As you talk, Aaron shares two significant memories and situations from his past. First, when he was in 7<sup>th</sup> grade, his dad and mom separated. As a result, his mom and siblings had to move to a tough neighborhood in order to afford the rent. At school, he was called a “momma’s boy” and “nerd” because he worked hard and went straight home afterward. He missed his dad terribly and would beg his mom to take him back. He began to resent her for putting his father out, despite the fact that he knew some of the things his father had done were wrong.

Second, he felt as though he had always failed to please his dad. His father was an athlete and academic success in high school. Aaron tried out for basketball in high school, but because of his height and weight he was slow and did not make the team. His younger brother, however, was 6’2” and lean like his dad—the star of every team he ever played on. While Aaron believed his dad tried to be encouraging to him, it would sting every time his dad would cheer at his brother’s games, coach him, and work out at the park on his game. Aaron tried to come and practice a few times, but they would tease him and tell him the level of the game was above him. It was crushing.

Worse, he made a promise to himself that he would be a better dad and be there for his children in a way that his dad had not been for him. But he can see himself falling into some of his father’s patterns, which makes him disgusted with himself. He tries to be involved in his sons’ lives and play games with them (they both love and excel at basketball), but they don’t always share many interests. Making time for them is difficult, and he gets frustrated with them when they don’t appreciate all he does for them. Two of his favorite phrases include: “These kids have no idea the sacrifices I make for them!” and “I wish I had a dad who was around as much as I am! They don’t realize how good they have it!”

While all of this sounds very negative, there are positives in Aaron’s life. While his life in the city was hard at first, he was at the top of his class academically and his teachers were appreciative of his hard work and determination. He also showed an early aptitude for computers and technology, and he quickly gained a reputation for being the go-to guy in his high school for all things IT. He learned the sound board for assemblies, the video equipment, and was up on all of the latest apps for creating music videos. His love of music turned into a part-time DJ job where his friendly personality kept him in demand and helped pay for the Technical School he attended. He was able to graduate without debt and even buy a small house while most of his friends were either saddled with large college loans or struggled to come up with a down payment for a house.

He came to faith in Christ in high school during a youth retreat. He began to read the Bible regularly and could not get enough of hearing and sharing the grace and mercies of the gospel. In addition to serving in the music ministry in his church, Aaron used his skills in the youth group, serving as a DJ for outreach events at retreats, weekends and special

events in his church. The kids he came in contact with loved him as he always tried to take the time to sit with each child and really listen to them, and remind them that Jesus never fails.

He and LaToya used to share their home with others in the church and hosted lunches and dinners in an effort to build fellowship and welcome newcomers in the church. They were a great team. With her flare for cooking and table arranging and his outgoing personality, people remarked that a visit to the Pearsons' meant you were in the church family!

I hope that readers feel a bit overwhelmed—and interested.



## Appendix E

### Gary Case Study

Do I need to teach the model?

Gary (his American name) is an international student who is irritated at his host parents because of their house rules. They expect him to clean his room, do household chores, be on time, and be polite. He has become angry because of these “unreasonable demands.” He didn’t have to do any of these things or live like this back in his home country. His mother or grandmother did all these things for him. He is especially annoyed when he is doing something else and is interrupted by his host parents and asked to fulfill his scheduled responsibilities. A recent interruption led to an outburst of anger and disrespect. He hollered, “I can’t stand it here. I want to move out.” He violently threw his laptop on the floor. He then went to his school counselor requesting to change his host home.

This is not the first time Gary has had this type of problem. He was placed in his current host family because the family that he lived with last year refused to have him back, citing his inconsiderateness, rudeness, angry responses, and unwillingness to comply with the host parents’ expectations. The current placement was with a family who has had success working with many international students, including many difficult ones. The school placement personnel told Gary from the outset that if this didn’t work out he would have to leave the school and the country. There would be no other placement.

Gary is a professing Christian so the counselor asked him what he thought God wanted from him in the situation. “Obedience, I guess,” he said. “But they just make so many rules and give me so many things to do. I guess I just need to trust God more. That’s what my mom said in an email.”

The counselor further engaged Gary in a dialogue.

Counselor: “I find that when I’m working on something or watching a football game and my wife comes into the room and begins talking, I get irritated and sometimes speak disrespectfully or with an impatient angry tone to my voice. Is that sin?”

Gary: “Yes, I think so.”

Counselor: “I agree. And is it excusable?”

Gary: “No. But she shouldn’t have interrupted you.”

Counselor: “Well, that might have been nice and thoughtful of her, but did that *force me* to be disrespectful to her? Or did something I wanted more than what God wanted at that moment motivate me to speak wrongly and become angry? What does God want from me more than anything else?”

Gary: “For you to obey Him.”

Counselor: “More than that, Gary. Read Romans 8:29 for me please.”

Gary: “For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son.”

Counselor: “So what is God’s goal that He guarantees He’ll produce in me?”

Gary: “It says He will make you like His Son.”

Counselor: “Yes, God is in the business of making me like Jesus. He wants me to have the character of Jesus. He wants me to want His likeness, because of His purchase of me, His forgiveness of me, His acceptance of me into His family. He wants me to look like one of His family members. If I really want Christ’s way in my life and believe He knows best about what should be in my life at any moment—such as having my wife interrupt me in the last 30 seconds of the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter—then is that something that I could and would handle differently, more respectfully?”

Gary: “Probably.”

Counselor: “You see, I wanted something else more at that moment. In the Old Testament, when people wanted something more than God and gave their obedience to that other thing, what was that thing called?”

Gary: “An idol?”

Counselor: “Yes. You are right. And that’s what I had erected in my heart—the idol of the football game, my will at that moment. And what is the result of any behavior that takes its cue from an idol—something wise or something foolish?”

Gary: “Foolish and sinful.”

Counselor: “Do you see any similarity between what you are going through and what I went through at the end of the game when my wife walked in?”

Gary: “Yeah, I do. But this family has so many rules. It’s hard.”

Counselor: “You want to be a pilot, right? You plan on going to flight training school after graduation. Tell me which pilot you’d like to fly with. One pilot gets really up tight and

nervous when a passenger gets rowdy or there is stormy weather or some warning light comes on in the cockpit. Another pilot handles the passengers, the weather, and the warning light with calmness and self-control. Which would you like to fly with?"

Gary: "The second one. The guy in control."

Counselor: "How do you think he got that way?"

Gary: "He had to be put in tough situations to get him ready."

Counselor: "What do you think God is doing by putting you in some tough situations now? Read James 1:2–4 for me, Gary."

Gary: "Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing."

Counselor: "So what do you think He wants to do in your life, Gary, by bringing tough, frustrating situations into your life?"

Gary: "He's making me grow up, I guess."

Counselor: "Do you want what He wants in your life, to grow up, as you say? Do you want likeness to Jesus Christ or something else—your own way in your time?"

\*\*\*

Gary returned to his host family, asked forgiveness, completed the chores, and displayed a level of respect that his former host family hadn't previously experienced from him.

**Conclusion:** In this case study, the model was not explicitly drawn out for the student, but the counselor used it nonetheless. The counselor made several interventions:

1. He listened and gathered information about the boy's "heat," his situation.
2. He listened to detect Gary's reactions to his situation, his heart's desires, and the consequences of his reactions.
3. Understanding more about Gary, the counselor used a personal illustration of his own temptations to point out how his heart had displaced Christ with his own desires (idols).
4. He referred to Gary's future interests and showed how God uses difficult, challenging situations to prepare people for His plans for them. Challenges are God's channels for growth. They are not accidental. God is always taking us somewhere! He's up to something!



5. By drawing the teen's attention to his own heart idol, he then showed how the gospel is relevant to Gary's life and the heat of Gary's particular battle. Satisfaction with Christ and God's purpose is the key to working through every challenge that comes our way.



## Appendix G

### Reading Confirmation & Response Form

(Please use one of these sheets for your response to each assigned reading.)

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Due Date \_\_\_\_\_

Due For Lesson# \_\_\_\_\_ Response Assignment Covers: List author & pages

Author \_\_\_\_\_ Pages/Chapters \_\_\_\_\_

**I have thoughtfully read the above assignment by the due date.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

Part I. Summary of main point of this reading section (one or two sentences):

Part II. Key sentence (use quotations marks):

Part III. Your explanation of the author's meaning and your thoughts about why it's important, right, or wrong. Cite at least one Scripture verse.

## Appendix H

### Response Paper Guidelines

Use the *Reading Confirmation & Response Paper Form* for each *Response Paper* reading assignment.

#### Guidelines:

Be sure to include your **name, related lesson (1,2, or 3)**, and **your signed confirmation of thoughtful reading** are **on each** Response Paper.

1. Part I: **Summarize** the main point of the entire reading section in a sentence or two.

2. Part II:

a. **Select ONE** sentence that you find as a significant thought **from each book** you read. One Response Paper from each book with assigned pages is due on the scheduled class date. (You may wish to underline or put an asterisk in the margin as you read so that you can go back to select your thekey sentences later.)

b. Have your selected sentence **in quotation marks** and the page number in the book from which it is taken and at the beginning of Part II of this response paper this section of your paper.

3. Part III:

a. Write two or three paragraphs **that:**

- 1. **Identify the main idea(s)** in your selected sentence and **explain what the author means by them.**
- 2. Refer to other ideas covered in the reading to **explain why you think the ideas in your selected sentence are important.** You may also refer to errors, abuses, false teachings, or harm or benefits, blessings, and positive fruit you've seen related to a wrong or right understanding of the concept(s) you identified in this sentence.
- 3. Refer to **at least one Scripture passage** that underscores the importance of the concepts you are explaining.

## Appendix I

### Reading Response Paper Sample

**R. Horne; From reading for the course:** *Dynamics of Biblical Change*, by D. Powlison.

**Part I.** (General summary of the article)

The Christian life is one of continuous growth in Christ toward more and more likeness to Christ.

**Part II.** (Specific quotation from the reading)

From *Seeing With New Eyes*, pg. 45; "Growth in the Christian life is like a yo-yo one is using while going up stairs."

**Part III.** (My responses / comments about the quotation)

Unless one understands that growing as a Christian includes ups and downs, like the movement of a yo-yo in action, he may be discouraged in his battles with sin—especially when he repeatedly fails and gives in to temptation.

Because of the work of the Holy Spirit, however, there is growth in holiness in the believer over the span of his lifetime. Like the progress of walking up stairs, we are going somewhere. 1 John 3:3 speaks of the fact that everyone who has this hope of seeing Christ, purifies himself as He is pure. But the book was obviously written to believers who still would sin.

The believer has ups and downs like a yo-yo, but with an ever-advancing growth, still making overall upward progress because he is going up the stairs.. Sometimes growth is slower and sometimes it occurs more rapidly. But believers do move onward and upward over the long haul. Our Father saved us knowing that our growth would be a process over time. Knowing that growth is a process of ups and downs is encouraging. I must be patient, persevere, and not give up hope.

## Appendix J

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Course \_\_\_\_\_

Which Quiz is this: Q1    Q2    Q3 (Circle one)

### Memory Verse Quizzes

**Come to class with your memory verse quiz completed, graded, and signed** to verify that you've done this honestly. (If you do not have your verses completed and graded<sup>14</sup> before class, you may come early or do them during the break.) Please use this *Memory Verse Form* for each quiz. **See Syllabus for HCH 1.3 page 6, for more details.**

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<sup>14</sup> **How to grade your memory verses:** You are allowed as many mistakes as there are verses to get full credit, and up to twice the number of mistakes as the number of verses for half credit. (For example: if there are three verses for a given week and you have a total of four mistakes in the three verses, you would get half credit.) Take a point off for  
a. each missing word (e.g. "For God loved the world..." missing "so"),  
b. each extra inserted word (e.g. "For God really so loved..." adding, "really"),  
c. each substituted word (e.g. "For the Lord so loved the world..." substituting "the Lord"), and  
d. a group of words that are out of order or reversed.

**Do not take off for spelling or punctuation.**

At the end of the course you may rewrite as many of the verses as you would like, and for each perfect verse you will receive an additional point of extra credit on the final exam. Don't be discouraged if memorization comes hard to you. You may not have done this for many years. But it will come as you persist.