



Week 1

Connect (30 minutes)

- **Share a little about yourself (where you grew up, your family, what brings you joy, your job...**
- **What is ONE aspect of this Soul Care journey that you are looking forward to?**
- **What is ONE thing you are anxious or concerned about as we begin this journey?**

Group Guidelines (10 minutes)

- **Be Prepared**
 - To get the most out of your time together, we ask that you complete the readings and journal your reflections on the questions at the end of each chapter. Please understand, the Soul Care book is intended to be read slowly, making time to process as you go. Don't read ahead, prayerfully process the material for each week.
- **Speak for Yourself**
 - We encourage you to share using "I" statements. We are only experts on ourselves. For example, instead of saying, "Everyone is busy," say, "I am busy." Instead of saying, "We all struggle with forgiving," say, "I struggle with forgiving."
- **Respect Others**
 - We want everyone to have the chance to share their thoughts, so be mindful of the time as you share your thoughts and experiences with the group.
- **No Fixing, Saving, No Setting Other People Straight**
 - Respect people's journeys and trust Holy Spirit is working within them and leading them into all truth in His timing. Resist the temptation to offer quick advice as people share.
- **Trust and Learn from Silence**
 - It is okay to have silence between responses as the group shares, giving members the opportunity to reflect. Remember, there is no pressure to share.
- **Vulnerability**
 - Honesty and transparency are essential to the work of healing. Make the decision now to share openly with this group as we journey together, walking in step with the Spirit towards deeper levels of freedom and healing.
- **Observe Confidentiality**
 - To create an environment that is safe for open and honest participation, anything someone shares with the group should not be repeated outside of the group. However, feel free to share your own story, discoveries, experiences, and growth.
- **Punctuality**
 - Resolve to arrive on time.

Introduction: My Journey to Soul Care (Pages 1-33) (25 minutes)

- **What is one thing you highlighted in the INTRODUCTION?** (Pages 1-16)
- **THE PAINFUL PATH TO LIFE CHANGE**
 - “You can’t fix the problems of the soul with a change in behavior only” (pg. 5).
 - Many of us grew up in a church culture that emphasized behavioral changes. Do the good things, don’t do the bad things and you will be changed! There are plenty of people who KNOW and DO many good and right things, but they are spiritually stuck, unsure of their identity in Christ and living in shame.
- **CHOOSING MATURITY**
 - “It is often the issues of the soul that keep us from intimacy with God and others...Praying, fasting, and memorizing Scripture cannot help us draw near– unless we address the soul blocks. We have these unconfessed, unprocessed, undealt-with issues, and they hinder us from experiencing the fullness of God” (pg. 7).
- **DEFENSIVENESS**
 - **How difficult is it for YOU to admit when you are wrong? Give an example.**
 - “God is patient, and He was trying to help me grapple with the real issues of my heart, but I was slow to admit the truth. But there can be no transformation where there is no revelation. We cannot overcome that which we will not admit” (pg. 9).
- **SURRENDER: FULL ACCESS TO GOD**
 - “Life change is an interactive, roll-up-your-sleeves, and get messy process. It is a journey of self-reflection, Holy Spirit inspiration, deep wrestling, and surrender. It is a process of discovering ourselves in true community and discovering God as He pierces through the layers of the heart. Give Him access. Go deep. It’s worth the trip” (pg. 16).

GATEWAYS TO LIFE CHANGE (Pages 17-33) (25 minutes)

- “You may have a destructive or shameful pattern of behavior that you know is unhealthy and needs to change. You want to change, you pray you will change, but the pattern continues unbroken. You have brief moments of reprieve, but you keep reverting back to this old pattern of behavior. You feel defeated” (pg. 17).
- **Can you relate to this cycle? What are some things you have tried, but have not resulted in lasting change?**
- **It’s a HEART issue.** Read Matthew 12:34-35 & 15:18-20.
- “Good and bad flow from the heart. If we are going to experience true transformation, we must deal with the issues of the heart and not simply external behaviors” (pg. 19). **Like a weed, we need to get to the roots, not just the leaves.**
- “God is far less concerned about our behavior than we think He is. He is much more concerned about our hearts than we’ll ever know. God knows if we get our hearts healthy, and rightly aligned with Him, our behaviors will follow” (pg. 20).

○ **CULTIVATING THE SOIL OF THE SOUL**

- “Life change occurs in an environment of true community. In true community, people live open, honest, and confessional lives in a culture of grace. There is no hiding or pretending. Secrets are toxic to the wellbeing of the soul” (pg. 22).
- **Have you ever been in a community where honesty, confession and grace were practiced? Describe it.**

○ **SELF-AWARENESS**

- “Self-awareness is a gateway to life change; it doesn’t guarantee it, but you can’t get there without it” (pg. 29).
- God’s light reveals the obstructions to our freedom. He’s not trying to hurt us, He’s helping us unpack the suitcase of our soul.
- **Why do you think it is so difficult for us to stand in the light of God and acknowledge the truth?**

 **Any Questions?**

 **Pray Together** (10 minutes)

 **For Next Week:**

- **Read first half of Soul Care Principle # 1 Identity (Pages 35-51)**