

TRUCK STOP QUESTIONS

- 1 What are you most looking forward to at the retreat this weekend?
 - 2 If you attended men's retreats in the past, what has stuck with you from those events?



MR2023 PLAYLIST

- 3** What comes to mind when you think of the word "virtue"? What virtues do you admire most in others and why?
 - 4** The primary way we grow in virtue is by immersing ourselves in the message of the death and resurrection of Christ. Spend some time reflecting on your testimony. How was God at work in drawing you to himself?
 - 5** The seven shaping virtues include humility, joy, gratitude, encouragement, generosity, servanthood, and godliness. Pick one (or more) of these virtues. How have you experienced growth in this area over the past year?
 - 6** What are some challenges you face in growing in these virtues?

- 7** What are some distractions that may be keeping you from receiving from the Lord this weekend?
What does it look like to practically and responsibly entrust these cares to the Lord?
 - 8** Who are some guys you'd like to intentionally connect with over the weekend?
 - 9** Spend some time praying about our time together at the retreat and how the Lord might use it for our good, the good of his church, and his glory.

Consider praying for the speakers, the volunteers, the men of your church, your close friends, etc.

VIRTUES

MR2023



GREETING

Thank you for taking the time to spend the weekend together with us! We have been praying for you and are excited for what the Lord has in store for us as we explore the Virtues of Grace. We pray this is a refreshing time for you. We also pray that this weekend is an opportunity for you to connect with other brothers and that what we experience together will encourage your heart and your relationship with the Lord. - KEITH COLLINS, REGIONAL LEADER

RETREAT APP



Download the [LCC App](#) to access retreat resources through your mobile device. Resources include Facility Map, Nearby Restaurants, Session Notes, and access to the Spotify Playlist.

OFFSITE COFFEE AND DINING Hours subject to change.

BAR & GRILL

COSMO'S	11A-10P
FLORA BAMA YACHT CLUB	11A-9P
HURRICANE GRILL & WINGS	11A-10P

BARBECUE

MOE'S ORIGINAL BBQ	11A-8P
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COFFEE

SOUTHERN GRIND (INDIGO)	6:30A-5P
SOUTHERN GRIND (WHARF)	7A-9P
STARBUCKS	6A-5P
WEST BEACH COFFEE HOUSE	7A-12P

ONSITE DINING HOURS ON FACILITY PAGE

DOC'S	11A-7:30P
FISHER'S (DOCKSIDE)	11A-9P
GT'S ON THE BAY	11A-10P
LOUISIANA LAGNIAPPE	5P-9P

SEAFOOD

SPEAKERS

VIRTUES

MR2023



KEITH COLLINS

As the senior pastor of Lakeview Christian Center, Keith leads the pastoral staff and the extended leadership team. He is responsible for preaching, teaching, and pastoral counseling and helps to cast vision for the overall direction of the church. Keith also serves as the Regional Leader for the Southeast Region of Sovereign Grace Churches. He and his wife Gina have been married since 1991 and have seven children.

BILLY RAIES

Billy earned his BBA and MBA from New Mexico State. In 1987, Billy resigned a successful career at Shell Oil to serve in full-time ministry, pastoring at Lakeview Christian Center before relocating in 1993 to serve as the senior pastor of Sovereign Grace Church in Midland, Tx. This year marks Billy's 30th year of faithful leadership in Midland. He and his wife Jan have been married since 1986 and have three sons.



KEITH BUNTING

Keith graduated from Toccoa Falls Bible College in 1995 and the Sovereign Grace Pastor's College in 2012. Using both his pastoral and musical gifts, Keith has served in multiple Sovereign Grace churches. He currently leads Risen Life Church in Melbourne, FL as the Senior Pastor. He and his wife Kristen have been married since 1994 and have three daughters.

BENNY PHILLIPS

Having served in a myriad of pastoral ministry roles for over 50 years, Benny pastors Redeemer Church at Lake Nona in Orlando. He and his wife Sheree have been married since 1973 and have seven children. They also founded Redeemer Counseling Group, a ministry to walk alongside, mentor, and care for others, to help build a culture of mercy and care in the local church.



SCHEDULE

VIRTUE

MR2023

FRIDAY

		LOCATION
5:00P	REGISTRATION OPENS	LOBBY
6:00P	COFFEE RECEPTION	BALLROOM LOBBY
7:00P	SESSION 1	BALLROOM

SATURDAY

		LOCATION
7:30A	BREAKFAST	GRAND REEF
9:00A	SESSION 2	BALLROOM
10:45A	BREAK	
11:00A	DEVOTION DIRECTION	BALLROOM
11:15A	DEVOTION TIME	
1:00P	LUNCH/SMALL GROUP	BEACH DECK
4:00P	SESSION 3	BALLROOM
6:00P	DINNER/FREE TIME/ ACTIVITIES IN BALLROOM LOBBY	

SUNDAY

		LOCATION
7:30A	BREAKFAST	GRAND REEF
8:30A	SMALL GROUP	GRAND REEF
9:45A	BREAKOUTS	
	LEADERSHIP IN THE HOME	BALLROOM
	TOOLS FOR APPLYING TRUTH	SALON FGH
	VICES	SAND DOLLAR
11:00A	WORSHIP/MINISTRY TIME	BALLROOM
12:00P	ROOM CHECKOUT	

FACILITY

VIRTUE

MR2023

LOBBY LEVEL

KEY

- ELEVATOR
- RESTROOMS
- STAIRS

VICES
BENNY PHILLIPS
SAND DOLLAR

SAND DOLLAR PARLOR BOARD ROOM

SAND CASTLE I SAND CASTLE II

FRONT DESK

ENTRANCE

LOBBY

FOLEY HALL

F

G

H

E

D

C

B

A

AZURE

CORAL

EMERALD

MAIN SESSIONS IN BALLROOM

VOYAGERS



**TOOLS FOR
APPLYING TRUTH**
KEITH BUNTING
SALON FGH

**HUMBLE, JOYFUL
LEADERSHIP
IN THE HOME**
BILLY RAIES
BALLROOM

BEACH LEVEL

KEY

- ELEVATOR
- RESTROOMS
- STAIRS

ONSITE RESTAURANTS

COASTAL COFFEE

7A-2P

LATITUDE 30

7A-11A; 5P-10P

LOBBY LOUNGE

6:30P-10P

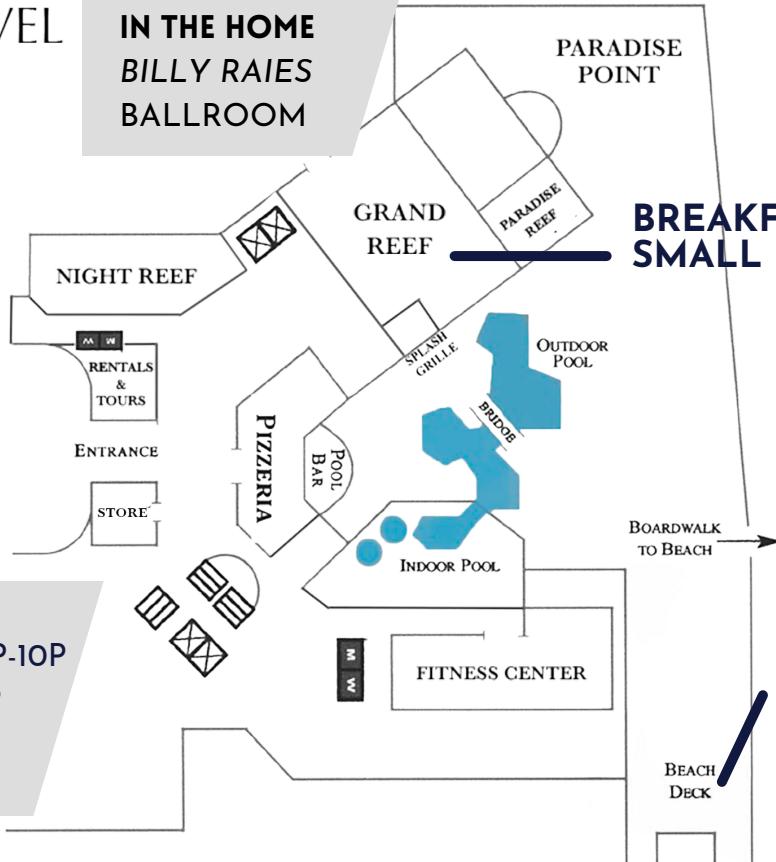
PIZZA CO.

12P-8P

SPLASH BAR & GRILL

CLOSED

**BREAKFAST/
SMALL GROUP**



**LUNCH/
SMALL GROUP**

SESSION 1

VIRTUES

MR2023

CULTIVATING VIRTUES

KEITH COLLINS | JANUARY 27, 2023

INTRODUCTION

2 PETER

"Second Peter teaches that the grace of God in Christ truly transforms and empowers Christians to live righteously, even in the face of opposition. This grace, introduced in 1:2-4, serves as the foundation for the remainder of the exhortations. The indwelling Holy Spirit (cf. 1:4, which characterizes Christians as 'partakers of the divine nature') produces virtuous 'qualities' in followers of Christ (1:8-12), which in turn results in fruitful lives." (ESV Study Bible, Intro to 2 Peter)

- GRACE is Present and is FOUNDATIONAL to a Transformed Life!!...Foundations are what we "Set Things On"—we "BUILD ON"
- The INDWELLING HOLY SPIRIT ...is Fully Engaged in The Life Described in This Epistle! ...We don't need to correct Peter, because he's promoting some kind of "Human-Self-Effort"
- There are "EXHORTATIONS" in this letter! ...We will be exhorted and obedience will be expected
- APPLICATION leads to FRUITFUL LIVES - Virtuous Qualities are Features of Application
- Peter is Not a "Plateaued Apostle"

GRACE IS FOUNDATIONAL

2 Peter 1:1-4: Simeon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who have obtained a faith of equal standing with ours by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ: 2 May grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord. 3 His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, 4 by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire.

PAST-TENSE, POWERFUL, SETTLED REALITIES!!

- v. 1 ...those who HAVE ... Obtained! (Greek. lanchánō - to allot, receive) ...it describes something we RECEIVED—Not Something we ACHIEVED! ...Remember, "Faith is a Gift, so that no man may boast" (Eph 2:8-9)
 - v. 1 ...BUT... it Was ACHIEVED! ...by the "RIGHTEOUSNESS" of Christ!
- "RIGHTEOUSNESS"????!!

SESSION 1
VIRTUES
MR2023

Romans 3:10: ..."none is righteous, no not one"!!

Romans 3:21-27: But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it— 22 the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: 23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24 and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, 25 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. 26 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. 27 Then what becomes of our boasting? It is excluded.

...There is a Particular Righteousness that Can Only Be Received! ...and it Wipes Out ANY Human Contribution ...Because GOD is a "Boasting Inhalator"!!

Probably the most important thing to notice here is that this command is based on verses 3 and 4 which are not a command but a description of what God has done for us. God's divine power has given us all things that lead to godliness (v. 3); "for this reason" make every effort yourself to be godly. Don't miss the connection. Since God has given power for godliness, strive to become godly! This is the heart of New Testament ethics. We labor for virtue because God has already labored for us and is at work in us. Don't ever reverse the order, lest you believe another gospel (which is no gospel). Never say, "I will work out my salvation in order that God might work in me." But say with the apostle Paul, "I work out my salvation for it is God who works in me to will and to do of his good pleasure" (Php 2:13). Never say, "I press on to make it my own in order that Christ might make me his own." But say with Paul, "I press on to make it my own because Christ Jesus has made me his own" (Php 3:12). There is a world of difference in a marriage where the husband doubts the love of his wife and labors to earn it, and a marriage where the husband rests in the certainty of his wife's love and takes pains joyfully not to live unworthily of it. Peter's point is: God is for us with divine power. Of that we may be sure. Now, in the confidence of that power, take pains not to live unworthily of his love. John Piper, "Confirm Your Election"

v. 3 ... "HE ...has granted" ... "HE ...has called us"

v. 4 ... HE ...has made us to partake of the Life of the Holy Spirit! ...v. 4 ... HE ...has liberated us

v. 9 ...These Past-Tense, Powerful, Settled Realities Must Not be FORGOTTEN or MARGINALIZED or Become BLURRY & SMALL in Our Sight!

This PREACHES!

WHAT IS PETER'S POINT? ...WHAT IS THE "AIM OF THIS EPISTLE?

...Is it the Same Aim that PAUL had in Writing Galatians? (Protecting the Doctrine of Justification from Judaizers?)...or the Writing of Romans (a detailed unpacking of the Substitutionary Atonement of the Cross of Christ)

...Peter Explaining His Strategy in This Epistle?

...v. 12-13 12 Therefore I intend always to remind you of these qualities, though you know them and are established in the truth that you have. 13 I think it right, as long as I am in this body,
to stir you up by way of reminder

... 3:1 "This is now the second letter that I am writing to you, beloved. In both of them I am stirring up your sincere mind by way of reminder.

...3:14 Therefore, beloved, since you are waiting for these, be diligent to be found in him without spot or blemish, and at peace ...[Reference to Paul's Letters in v. 15-16]

...3:17-18 "...take care that you are not carried away with the error of lawless people and lose your own stability. 18 But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."

There are Things "ESTABLISHED" and Things to "GROW IN" ...Peter is EXHORTING them to Action—He's Not Rehearsing the Content of Galatians & Romans!

...Peter's Aim is APPLICATION ...and application is Not Less than rehearsing the doctrine of justification—but it is More than just remembering the truth you have been established in.

"Past grace—justification by faith and adoption as God's child—has often been presented as the master key to Christian growth. The dynamic of the Christian life is portrayed as a matter of continually pressing into how God forgave and accepted you. 'You are sanctified by remembering and believing afresh that you are justified by what Jesus did on the cross for you.' ...Is that true? Justification by faith in the sacrifice of Christ certainly is a cornerstone of our salvation. But is remembering that always the crucial ingredient in how we are progressively changed and sanctified? The Bible's answer to this pastoral and practical questions is sometimes yes, often no. Consider this metaphor: Scripture portrays the transformation of our lives in a range of colors and shades. There are reds, yellows, and blues—with 16.8 million shades in between. So any monochromatic view of sanctification is like saying, 'You are changed by the color red.' For some Christians, some of the time, amid some life struggles, to remember the color red—justification by Christ's death, adoption as God's child, the forgiveness of sins—proves pivotal. For other Christians, at other times, facing other specific struggles, other colors prove pivotal."

David Powlison, How Does Sanctification Work?, p.26-27

...Peter seems to be painting with some other colors in 2 Peter.

"...the primary reason for rejecting preaching that makes 'a beeline to the cross' (as we have described it) is that it diminishes the glory of the cross. It thinks it is doing the opposite. It thinks the cross is more magnified by bringing the sermon to a crescendo every week with a celebration of substitutionary atonement. That is not the way to make much of the glories of the cross. By all means, make sure that the congregation knows the details of the greatest event in the history of the world—the death and resurrection of Jesus. But then spend most of your time preaching the glorious achievements of the cross, which fill the pages of Scripture."

John Piper, Expository Exultation, p. 214

...THIS is what Peter does in 2 Peter!! ...The Cross HAS Achieved something for us ...&... the Empowering Grace of the Spirit has ENABLED something for us! (1 Peter 1:1-4)
 ...Let us live in it! (2 Peter 1:5 - 3:18)

WE ARE EXHORTED TO "DO-THE-MATH"

2 Peter 1:5-10: For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, 6 and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, 7 and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love. 8 For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 For whoever lacks these qualities is so nearsighted that he is blind, having forgotten that he was cleansed from his former sins. 10 Therefore, brothers, be all the more diligent to confirm your calling and election, for if you practice these qualities you will never fall.

- v. 5 ..."For this very reason" ...GRACE (The Cross & the Spirit) = the Motivation, the Reasons that we DO what we Do!!
- Notice the "Vocabulary of Application"
- Notice the CONCERNS that Peter is being Mindful of in This Exhortation!

...Peter is Concerned that SOMETHING ELSE is going to be Applied in Their Lives!!

"In this second letter, Peter describes (ch. 2) some twisted versions of Christian truth being taught" (ESV Bible Intro)

- 2:1 "But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies..."
- 2:2 "And many will follow their sensuality..."

- 2:10 "...those who indulge in the lust of defiling passion and despise authority. Bold and willful, they do not tremble..."
- 2:13 "...They count it pleasure to revel in the daytime. They are blots and blemishes reveling in their deceptions, while they feast with you."
- 2:14 "They have eyes full of adultery, insatiable for sin. They entice unsteady souls. They have hearts trained in greed."
- The World's APPLICATION MACHINE is running 24/7! (People, algorithms)
 - The World is Redefining Sex, Sexuality, Marriage, Gender, etc. ...It is "despising & rejecting authority" ...and it is creeping into the thinking of the church!
 - "Hearts trained in greed"
 - "Enticing Unsteady Souls"
- v. 8 ...CONCERN for –keeping their lives from becoming ineffective and unfruitful
- v. 9 ...CONCERN for –guarding them from losing sight of the Centrality, Meaningfulness, and Richness of God's GRACE!!
- v. 10 ...CONCERN to –keep them from falling!

HOW DOES PETER SEEK TO DO ALL THESE THINGS?

- ..by Adding Virtues ('these qualities')! ...v. 5, 8
 - v. 5...make every effort to supplement (KJV - 'add to') your faith with virtue..."

APPLICATION INVOLVES "BIBLICALLY DOING THE MATH" –IE. "ADDING" AND "SUBTRACTING"!!

Romans 8:13: 13 For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.

Colossians 3:5-8: 5 Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. 6 On account of these the wrath of God is coming. 7 In these you too once walked, when you were living in them. 8 But now you must put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and obscene talk from your mouth. 9 Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices 10 and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator.

...N.T. Fruitfulness Involves SUBTRACTING! ...then Paul gives us a 'shopping list'!!

Ephesians 5:3-4: But sexual immorality and all impurity or covetousness must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints. 4 Let there be no filthiness nor foolish talk nor crude joking, which are out of place, but instead let there be thanksgiving.

...Instead of "Vices"—Let there be **VIRTUES!**

...Note: These "Vices" Take Up the Space where Virtues Go!

Colossians 3:12: Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience

APPLICATION BRINGS FIELDS OF FRUITFULNESS

2 Peter 1:8: For if **these qualities** are yours and are increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Virtues are a means of effectiveness & fruitfulness

CULTIVATING VIRTUES

ILLUSTRATION: The Settlers of Montreal

What if in 2023 ...God were to Cultivate a Field of Humility or Joy or Gratitude or Servanthood or...

- ...What effectiveness & fruitfulness would come to my marriage & parenting—If fields were emptied of anger, complaining, pouting, sullenness, irritability & crankiness ...and God's Word was planted in a field of JOY
- ...What effectiveness & fruitfulness would come to our lives—If fields were cleared of comparison, criticism, envy, covetousness ...and God's Word was planted in a field of GRATITUDE!

NOTES

SPEAKER:

TITLE:

SESSION 2

VIRTUES

MR2023

HOW GOD SHAPES A HUMBLE HEART

BILLY RAIIS | JANUARY 28, 2023

PRAYING TO GOD IN RESPONSE TO GOD SPEAKING TO US

Isaiah 66:1-2: Thus says the LORD: "Heaven is my throne, and the earth is My footstool; what is the house that you would build for Me, and what is the place of My rest. All these things My hand has made, and so all these things came to be, declares the LORD. But this is the one to whom I will look: he who is humble and contrite in spirit and trembles at My Word.

MAIN POINT: GOD SHAPES HUMBLE HEARTS BY HELPING US UNDERSTAND WHO HE IS, WHO WE ARE, AND WHAT WE ARE CALLED TO DO.

HUMILITY IS SHAPED BY SEEING THE GLORY OF GOD IN THE MISSION OF CHRIST
(JOHN 3:22-30)

- A) The Mission was Given by God, Designed for You and not Compared to Others - vs. 27
- B) We are the Pointers not the Point - vs 28

Pride lifts up the heart against God. It contends for the supremacy with Him.
- Charles Bridges

- C) Your Mission is to Serve in Preparation for the Wedding of Christ and His Bride - vs. 29

Mission motivated humility strengthens our hearts with joy.

- D) A Heart Shaped by Humility Magnifies Him Who is Truly Great - vs. 30

"Humility brings quiet; a 'composure of the soul' that stills our turmoil. It brings clarity and purpose because it is 'a victory over ourselves.' That is why humility brings true courage; that is, the will and ability to act selflessly in sacrificial ways. It is a practiced, emotional self-denial that frees us up for kingdom service." - R. C. Sproul

**HUMILITY IS SHAPED BY SEEING THE
GLORY OF GOD IN THE MAJESTY OF CHRIST
JOHN 3:31-36**

A) Jesus is Majestic Because of Where He is From - vs. 31

No man shall ever behold the glory of Christ by sight hereafter, who doth not in some measure behold it by faith here in this world. the pretended desires of many to behold the glory of Christ in heaven, who have no view of it by faith whilst they are there in this world are nothing but self-deceiving imaginations... Oh to behold the Glory of Christ! Here in would I live, Here in would I die, here on would I dwell in my thoughts and my affections until all things here below become as dead and deformed things, and in no longer, any way, calling out for my affections. A constant view of the glory of Christ will revive our souls and cause our spiritual lives to flourish and thrive. Our souls will be revived by the transforming power with which beholding Christ is always accompanied. This is what transforms us daily into the likeness of Christ. - John Owen

B) Jesus is Majestic Because of What He Says - vs. 32-34a

- **Isaiah 66:2:** But this is the one to whom I will look: he who is humble and contrite in spirit and trembles at My Word.

C) Jesus is Majestic Because of What He Has Been Given - vs. 34b - 35

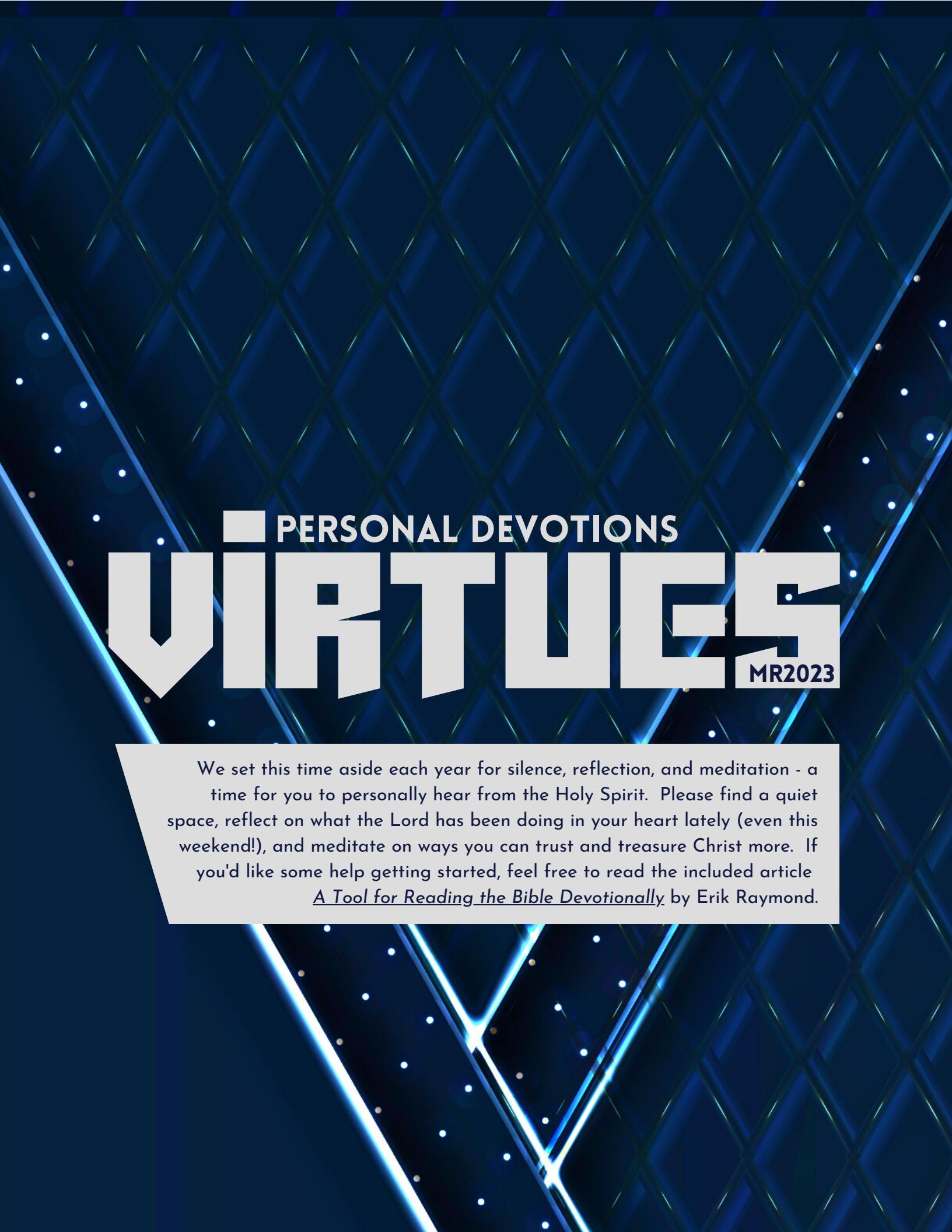
D) Jesus is Majestic Because of What He Does - vs. 36

Philippians 2:5-8: Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, 6 who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7 but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

NOTES

SPEAKER:

TITLE:



PERSONAL DEVOTIONS

VIRTUES

MR2023

We set this time aside each year for silence, reflection, and meditation - a time for you to personally hear from the Holy Spirit. Please find a quiet space, reflect on what the Lord has been doing in your heart lately (even this weekend!), and meditate on ways you can trust and treasure Christ more. If you'd like some help getting started, feel free to read the included article [A Tool for Reading the Bible Devotionally](#) by Erik Raymond.

NOTES





A TOOL FOR READING THE BIBLE DEVOTIONALLY

ERIK RAYMOND, THE GOSPEL COALITION | MARCH 31, 2021

Sometimes we make reading the Bible more difficult than it is. I want to help eliminate the excuses by establishing healthy patterns for reading the Word. Over the years I've used the acronym CRAM to help me to read God's Word devotionally. CRAM stands for Character of God, Responsibility, Attitude and Actions, and Meditation. I explain it below and provide an example of how to do it. The goal is to lead you to prayer to and delight in God through Christ. CRAM is not an exhaustive Bible study but a devotional Bible study aimed at the head, heart, and hands.

Character of God

The point of Bible study is to encounter God. While we may not find God mentioned in every verse, the goal of reading the Bible is to learn more about who God is. When we read the Bible, we should be asking God to help open our eyes to behold wonderful things about him from his Word. When we read the Bible, we should be asking, What does this passage teach me about who God is? Perhaps it reveals something about God's attributes, promises, law, or providence. It could be straightforward like in Ex. 32:5-8, or it could be revealed via the narrative (Gen. 19:1-29, Gen. 50:15-21, or the book of Esther). Before looking for personal application, consider the theological understanding. This will shape the personal application.

Write down what you see.

Responsibility

Next, ask, What does God require from people from this text? Is there something commanded? Is there something modeled that reflects what God has prescribed elsewhere in the Bible? Sometimes it's straightforward, for example, the Ten Commandments (Ex. 20). Other times, it may be referenced on the way to a parable or narrative (Luke 18:9). It could be shown through the course of the narrative (Luke 19:28-40). In the New Testament, so much of the discourse writing can help you understand the Old Testament narratives. If you can answer the question: what does God expect or require from people here, then you are on the right track.

Write down what you find.



A TOOL FOR READING THE BIBLE DEVOTIONALLY (CONTINUED)

Attitude and Actions

Content with moving the bookmark forward or learning new information, we can be tempted to skip over this crucial step. But growth comes by pressing down the light of Scripture upon our hearts to reveal the idols lurking in the shadows. What we're doing here is connecting the dots from the Character of God and the Responsibility in the passage to our own lives. We're asking: What does this reveal about my attitude and actions?

Write down what you discover.

Meditation

Here we are asking how the study of this passage vectors me to trust and treasure Christ more. When we look at what God requires and how we fall short, we can then consider how Christ perfectly lived where we failed and died to pay the penalty for our sin. In other words, we are looking to discover how Jesus saves us from our law breaking by his doing and dying for us.

Furthermore, I like to grab a phrase or verse from the passage that sticks out to me. I'll often write it down or try to memorize it and then keep it with me throughout the day as a spiritual lozenge. Just turn it over in your mind and heart as a prayer prompt for delight.

[Example provided online]

Why do we read the Bible? Reading the Bible is intended to procure our worship by revealing who God is, what he expects from us, where we fall short, and how Christ is just the Savior we need. There are many helpful tools that help Christians to read the Bible in this way. Early on in my ministry, when I was an intern, a pastor at the church developed an acronym that we used to help disciple people. It's simple and versatile (it's also easy to use in family devotions, small groups, or in one on one Bible reading). Over the last two decades, I've continued to use it and share it with others. I share it with you hoping it serves you well also.

<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/erik-raymond/a-tool-for-reading-the-bible-devotionally/>



NOTES

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NOTES





■ SMALL GROUP

VIRTUES

MR2023



Come prepared to talk with other brothers about your experience at the Men's Retreat. Consider some of your answers to the Truck Stop questions from your ride down as well as some of your answers to your personal devotion time. Here are some things to keep in mind when engaging with the guys in your small group.

GOSPEL + SAFETY + TIME = A CHURCH WHERE ANYONE CAN GROW

RAY ORTLAND, THE GOSPEL COALITION | SEPTEMBER 24, 2020

Gospel + safety + time. It's what everyone needs.
A lot of gospel + a lot of safety + a lot of time.

Gospel: good news for bad people through the finished work of Christ on the cross and the endless power of the Holy Spirit. Multiple exposures. Constant immersion. Wave upon wave of grace and truth, according to the Bible.

Safety: a non-accusing environment. No embarrassing anyone. No cornering anyone. No shaming. But respect and sympathy and listening and understanding, so that people can exhale and open up and unburden their souls. A church environment where no one seeking the Lord has anything to fear.

Time: no pressure. Not even self-imposed pressure. No deadlines on growth. Urgency, but not hurry, because no one changes quickly. A lot of "space" for complicated people to rethink their lives at a deep level. God is patient.

This is what our churches must be:
gentle environments of gospel + safety + time.
It's where we're finally free to grow.



[HTTPS://WWW.THEGOSPELCOALITION.ORG/BLOGS/RAY-ORTLUND/GOSPEL-SAFETY-TIME/](https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/ray-ortlund/gospel-safety-time/)

SMALL GROUP SESSION 1



1 What were you looking forward to the most by coming to this year's Men's Retreat?
• What's been a highlight for you so far?

2 What comes to mind when you think about "virtues"?

3 Why is it important to recognize grace as foundational for cultivating virtues?

4 The World is redefining sex, sexuality, marriage, gender, etc and despising and rejecting authority. How does adding virtues guard us from this?

5 What benefits do we obtain by cultivating virtues?

6 How does seeing the Glory of God help shape our hearts to grow in humility?

7 How would you describe your personal experience of cultivating virtues?
• Where have you seen God at work in your life in helping you grow in the adding and subtracting (putting on and putting off) needed for cultivating virtues?
• What are some hindrances (pursuits, habits, etc.) keeping you from cultivating virtues?
• Any specifics related to humility?

8 What are some ways that the Lord met you during your Personal Devotions time?
• What are some things from that time that you'd like to see cultivated or continued in your time back home?

9 What are some ways we can be praying for you related to our time together at the retreat?

SMALL GROUP SESSION 2



- 1** What do you like to do for fun? What's been a highlight for you so far?
• What hobbies do you enjoy?

2 What does it mean that humility and joy are best friends?

- 3** How do trials play a role in shaping our hearts?
• Do trials always shape our hearts for good? Why or why not?

4 Why is it important to recognize the hand of God at work in our trials?

5 How can you grow in delighting in God in your daily life? What are some practical steps you can take to experience and cultivate joy in your life and church?

6 What are some practical ways that you've found helpful for finding joy in difficult circumstances?

7 What does community look like for you?
• Who do you have in your life to walk with through trials?
• What does it look like for you to grow in community this year?

8 What are some other takeaways from this weekend you'd like to incorporate into your life back home?
• Who can you be walking with in this pursuit?

9 As we conclude our time away together, how can we be praying for one another?



SESSION 3

VIRTUES

MR2023



HOW GOD SHAPES A JOYFUL HEART

BILLY RAIES | JANUARY 28, 2023

HUMILITY BEFORE GOD AND JOY IN GOD ARE BEST FRIENDS

John 3:29-30: 29 The one who has the bride is the bridegroom. The friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly at the bridegroom's voice. Therefore this joy of mine is now complete. 30 He must increase, but I must decrease.

MAIN POINT: GOD PROMISES US GROWING JOY IN CHRIST WHEN WE PURSUE GROWING MATURITY IN CHRIST.

**KNOWLEDGE OF GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY
PLUS CHRISTLIKE MATURITY ADDS UP TO JOY
(JAMES 1:1-2)**

Embracing trials doesn't mean that we are to pretend they are not trials. It simply means that we are not to allow our reactions to them to be determined by how they feel to us.
Mark Dever

**GOD TESTS OUR FAITH TO PROVE
GENUINENESS AND PRODUCE ENDURANCE
(JAMES 1:3)**

1 Peter 1:3-7: 3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, 5 who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. 6 In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, 7 so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

"A refiner's fire does not randomly destroy like a forest fire. A refiner's fire does not consume completely like the fire of an incinerator. A refiner's fire purifies and targets like a laser the impurities that diminish its value, burns them up, and magnifies the worth of the silver and gold." John Piper

When through the deep waters I call thee to go, The rivers of woe shall not thee overflow; For I will be with thee, thy troubles to bless, And sanctify to thee thy deepest distress. When through fiery trials thy pathways shall lie, My grace, all sufficient, shall be thy supply; The flame shall not hurt thee; I only design, Thy dross to consume, and thy gold to refine.

Published by John Rippon, Authored by "K"

"So far as personal sorrows are concerned, it would be a very sharp and trying experience to me to think that I have an affliction which God never sent me, that the bitter cup was never filled by His hand, that my trials were never measured out by Him, nor sent to me by His arrangement of their weight and quantity. Oh, that were bitterness indeed! But, on the contrary, James here sees the hand of God in all his trials, and I pray that you and I may do the same. May we see that our heavenly Father fills the cup with loving tenderness, and holds it out, and says, 'Drink, my child; bitter as it is, it is a love-potion which is meant to do thee permanent good.' The discerning of the hand of God is a sweet lesson in the school of experience."

Charles Spurgeon

OUR JOY IS ROOTED IN GOD'S COMMITMENT TO MAKE US LIKE CHRIST (JAMES 1:4)

"Grace comes in uncomfortable forms. God will take you where you did not intend to go in order to produce in you what you could not achieve or become on your own." Paul Tripp

"So James is very bold: we should, he says 'consider it pure joy' whenever we face trials of various kinds. This is not a perverse form of Christian masochism, but an entirely appropriate response if we remember the Christian's goals. If our highest goals are creature comforts, this passage is incomprehensible; if our highest goals include growth in Christian character, James' evaluation makes eminent sense." Don Carson

NOTES

SPEAKER:

TITLE:



BREAKOUTS **VIRTUES** MR2023

HUMBLE, JOYFUL LEADERSHIP
IN THE HOME
BILLY RAIES
BALLROOM

TOOLS FOR
APPLYING TRUTH
KEITH BUNTING
SALON FGH

VICES
BENNY PHILLIPS
SAND DOLLAR

TOOLS FOR APPLYING TRUTH

KEITH BUNTING | JANUARY 29, 2023

A few challenges in our "Thin-Thinking Environment":

- On average, Americans spend 3 hours and 15 minutes on their phones per day.
- On average, Americans check their phones 58 times per day.
- Half of all Americans begin screen time sessions within 3 minutes of the last.
- According to trends, smartphone usage is expected to increase, not decrease.
- On average, Americans have only 4 hours and 26 minutes free per week (there are 168 hours in a week).

This is a harsh climate for spiritual growth! The soil of our souls is not well-fertilized.

Galatians 6:7-8: [7] Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap.[8] For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life.

We are always sowing to something!

1 Timothy 6:10-11: [10] For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs. [11] But as for you, O man of God, flee these things. Pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, gentleness.

2 Timothy 2:22: [22] So flee youthful passions and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart.

WHAT IS TO BE THE MOTIVATOR FOR APPLYING TRUTH? A PROMISED REWARD!

1 Timothy 4:10: [10] For to this end we toil and strive, because we have our hope set on the living God, who is the Savior of all people, especially of those who believe.

Philippians 3:8-14: [8] Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ [9] and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith—[10] that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, [11] that by any means possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead. [12] 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. [13] 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, [14] I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

David Mathis: It is this endless sea of His grace that we walk the path of the Christian life and take steps of grace-empowered effort and initiative. I can flip a switch, but I don't provide the electricity. I can turn on a faucet, but I don't make the water flow. There will be no light and no liquid refreshment without someone else providing it. So it is with the ongoing grace of God. His grace is essential for our spiritual lives, but we don't control the supply. We can't make the favor of God flow, but He has given us circuits to connect and pipes to open expectantly. There are paths along which He has promised favor. ("Cultivating Habits of Grace": Article by Mathis)

WHAT ARE THE TOOLS FOR APPLYING TRUTH?

BIBLE INTAKE

2 Timothy 3:16-17: [16] All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, [17] that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

James 1:22-25: [22] But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. [23] For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks intently at his natural face in a mirror.[24] For he looks at himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like. [25] But the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing.

Tim Chester: The Bible is the source of truth that counters the lies of sin that the world perpetuates. If we are not in the Bible day by day, our hearts will be immersed only in lies. (You Can Change: Tim Chester Page 141)

1 John 2:26-27: [26] I write these things to you about those who are trying to deceive you. [27] But the anointing that you received from him abides in you, and you have no need that anyone should teach you. But as his anointing teaches you about everything, and is true, and is no lie—just as it has taught you, abide in him.

Psalm 119:159-160: [159] Consider how I love your precepts! Give me life according to your steadfast love. [160] The sum of your word is truth, and every one of your righteous rules endures forever.

Psalm 19:7-8: [7] The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul; the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple; [8] the precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes.

David Mathis: When we get alone with the Bible, we are not alone. God has not left us to ourselves to understand His words and feed our souls. No matter how thin your training, no matter how spotty your routine, the Helper stands ready. Take up the text in confidence that God is primed to bless your being with his very breath. There is more than meets the eye to Bible reading and study as habits of grace. There is a variable we can't control. An enigmatic power we cannot command. A mysterious goodness we can only receive. He is the Holy Spirit. ("The X Factor in Bible Reading" Article by David Mathis)

- Resolve to read or listen.
- Ask for help.
- Learn by practicing.
- Read for breadth and depth.
- Have fun.

MEDITATION

Puritan Thomas Watson: a holy exercise of the mind whereby we bring the truths of God to remembrance, and do seriously ponder upon them and apply them to ourselves.

Puritan William Bates: meditate ordinarily till thou doest find some sensible benefit conveyed to thy soul. Puritan Tools for Practicing Meditation:

1. Clear the mind of all worldly distractions.
2. Come to God with a heart cleansed from the guilt of sin.
3. Approach meditation with the utmost of seriousness.
4. Find a quiet place.

PRAYER

C.S. Lewis: Prayer in the sense of petition, asking for things, is a small part of it; confession and penitence are its threshold, adoration is its sanctuary, the presence and vision and enjoyment of God its bread and wine. ("The Efficacy of Prayer: C.S. Lewis")

Romans 12:12: [12] Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer.

Acts 1:14: [14] All these with one accord were devoting themselves to prayer, together with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers.

Acts 2:42: [42] And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.

Acts 6:4: [4] But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word.

Colossians 4:2: [2] Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving.

1 Thessalonians 5:17: [17] pray without ceasing.

A few tools:

1. Pray in structured and unstructured ways.
2. Pray the Bible.
3. Pray in solitude and pray corporately.
4. Pray with dependence and doxology.
5. Pray short and pray long.
6. Pray spontaneously and scheduled.

COMMUNITY

Tim Chester: Imagine one of those children's books that have pictures of different people with the pages divided so you can mix and match different heads, bodies, and legs. You flip over the pages to match up the pictures, enjoying the funny combinations as you go. Paul says the church is a body with Christ as the head. Our job is to change the body so that it matches the head. And, we can't be the body of Christ on our own. We can't be mature on our own. Change is a community project. (You Can Change: Tim Chester: Page 152)

Ephesians 4:15-16: [15] Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, [16] from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.

Hebrews 10:23-25: [23] Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. [24] And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, [25] not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near. And, the writer of Hebrews fills it out some more for us in an earlier chapter.

Hebrews 3:12-13: [12] Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God. [13] But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called "today," that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.

John Piper: Christian friendships exist for this: to say things that will keep each other believing. ("We Need Each Other" Article by John Piper)

Tim Chester: Love without truth is like doing heart surgery with a wet fish. But truth without love is like doing heart surgery with a hammer. (You Can Change: Tim Chester: Page 158)

VICES: SPRING OF LIFE TO BROKEN CISTERNS

BENNY PHILLIPS | JANUARY 29, 2023

INTRODUCTION

Jeremiah 2:11-14: Has a nation changed its gods, even though they are no gods? But my people have changed their glory for that which does not profit. 12 Be appalled, O heavens, at this; be shocked, be utterly desolate, declares the LORD, 13 for my people have committed two evils: they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed out cisterns for themselves, broken cisterns that can hold no water. 14 “Is Israel a slave? Is he a homeborn servant? Why then has he become a prey?

“The little parable of verse 13 on exchanging living water for broken cisterns says it all; and to those who knew the latter by experience it would have spoken volumes.” Derek Kidner

All of us have a common struggle. It is the fight with our sin nature and the temptations that come with that struggle. Even with those who struggle with addiction, it is a more common struggle than we might have thought. We are not fundamentally different from each other. Any differences are a matter of degree, not of kind. The decisive difference between people is not whether one is an addict or a non-addict. It is whether a person is once-born (in sin, and suppressing the knowledge of God), or twice born (in Christ, but still battling remnant sin).

WHEN TEMPTATION COMES OUR WAY

James 1:13-15: Let no one say when he is tempted, “I am being tempted by God,” for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one. 14 But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. 15 Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.

A. TRIALS AND TESTS WILL COME.

“James pronounces a blessing on the one who endures (bears up under, perseveres through) trial. But when it comes to tests, it refers no longer to the outward, circumstantial trial, but to inner enticement to sin; what we speak of as temptation.” J.A. Motyer

B. THE SOURCE OF THE VOICE

The fact of the matter is we can no longer trust our own natures. There is within us a deep well of dominating and alluring desires; there is within us a fatal weakness which guarantees that we will fall short of God’s glorious intentions for us.

THE STOLEN WATER OF FOLLY

Proverbs 9:13-18: The woman Folly is loud; she is seductive and knows nothing. 14 She sits at the door of her house; she takes a seat on the highest places of the town, 15 calling to those who pass by, who are going straight on their way, 16 "Whoever is simple, let him turn in here!" And to him who lacks sense she says, 17 "Stolen water is sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant." 18 But he does not know that the dead are there, that her guests are in the depths of Sheol.

A. THE WRONG BANQUET

In his book *Addiction-A Banquet in the Grave* Ed Welch vividly describes the luring enticement of the Biblical woman called Folly.

B. LISTENING FOR THE RIGHT VOICE

"It would be nice to say 'Oops, I lost my way', then start following the voice of wisdom. But as you know, the work in front of you will be a battle." Ed Welch

CONCLUSION - A GREATER GOSPEL

A. EXPOSING THE BIG LIE

B. LIVING IN OPEN COMMUNITY

When people struggling with addiction are also new creatures, then they have a new Lord, a new nature, a new identity, a new power at work— and a new community. The battles may be long and hard, the setbacks many, and the successes erratic. Although a person may struggle with the same old things, something essential is different, and that makes all the difference in the long run. This truth should shape the very way we "do church." A church community that understands that we are all fellow strugglers on the same path should be a very welcoming place for all struggling pilgrims including addicts. The language of recovery, of re-ordering what we live for and even what we "worship," should be familiar to all followers of Christ. Every church should be striving for all members to turn away from whatever intoxicates them and instead be filled with the Spirit—intoxicated with God. To do this, we must understand more fully how Scripture sees addictions. This will, by necessity, reshape the way we think about the role of the church and addictions.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

[Addiction-A Banquet in the Grave: Finding Hope in the Power of the Gospel](#) by Ed Welch

[Closing the Window](#) by Tim Chester

[I Told Me So: Self-Deception and the Christian Life](#) by Greg Ten Elshof

NOTES

SPEAKER:

TITLE:

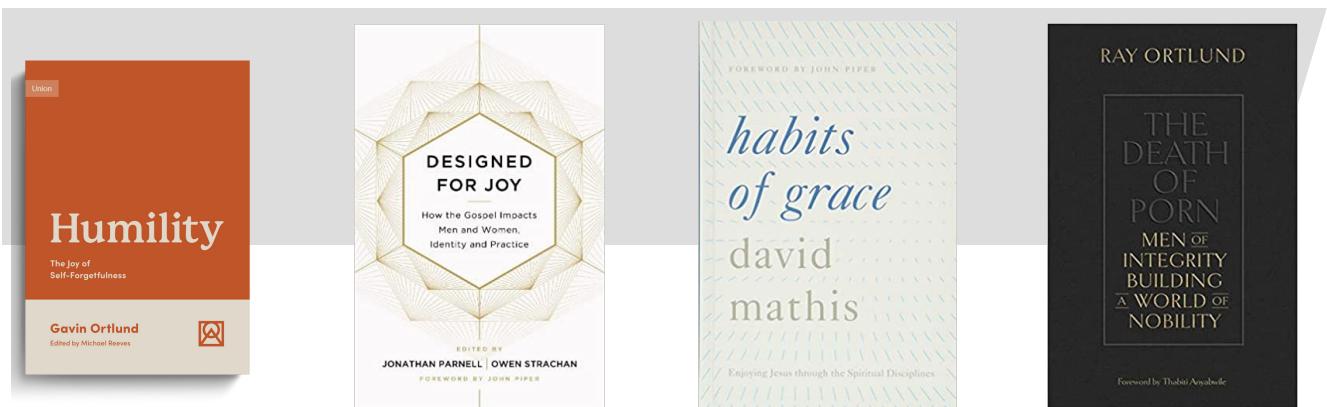


RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

VIRTUES

MR2023

SESSION APPLICATION



HUMILITY
THE JOY OF SELF-FORGETFULNESS
GAVIN ORTLUND

JOY IN ROLES
DESIGNED FOR JOY
PARNELL/STRACHAN

TOOLS
HABITS OF GRACE
DAVID MATHIS

VICES
THE DEATH OF PORN
RAY ORTLUND

CHRISTIAN LIVING



COMMUNITY
CARING FOR ONE ANOTHER
ED WELCH

GROWTH
YOU CAN CHANGE
TIM CHESTER

INTRO
DELIGHTING IN THE TRINITY
MICHAEL REEVES

PRODUCTIVITY
DO MORE BETTER
TIM CHALLIES

SPECIAL INTEREST



DEVOTIONAL
TAKE HEART
DAVID POWLISON

KIDS
EXPLORING THE BIBLE
DAVID MURRAY

MARRIAGE
WHEN SINNERS SAY "I DO"
DAVE HARVEY

FOR WOMEN
FEMININE APPEAL
CAROLYN MAHANEY

YOUR RETURN QUESTIONS



1 What's one way you encountered the Lord this weekend? What are some memorable moments from the weekend you'd want to share with someone who didn't attend? What was convicting or encouraging for you about our study on virtues?



MR2023 PLAYLIST

2 What does your personal devotion time look like back home? What are some ways the Lord met you during that time this weekend? What are some ways you can continue to develop this time with the Lord?

3 What are some ways you can continue to grow in community this year?

- Is there a small group you can join?
- Is there a marriage course you and your wife can attend together?
- Is there a men's bible study or book study you could start or join?
- Who are some brothers in your church you'd like to get to know better? What are some plans you can make to connect with them?
- Consider forming a group to walk through the Sovereign Grace Journal and accompanying small group questions included in your binder.

7 What are some ways this retreat has encouraged you in your family life?

Where applicable:

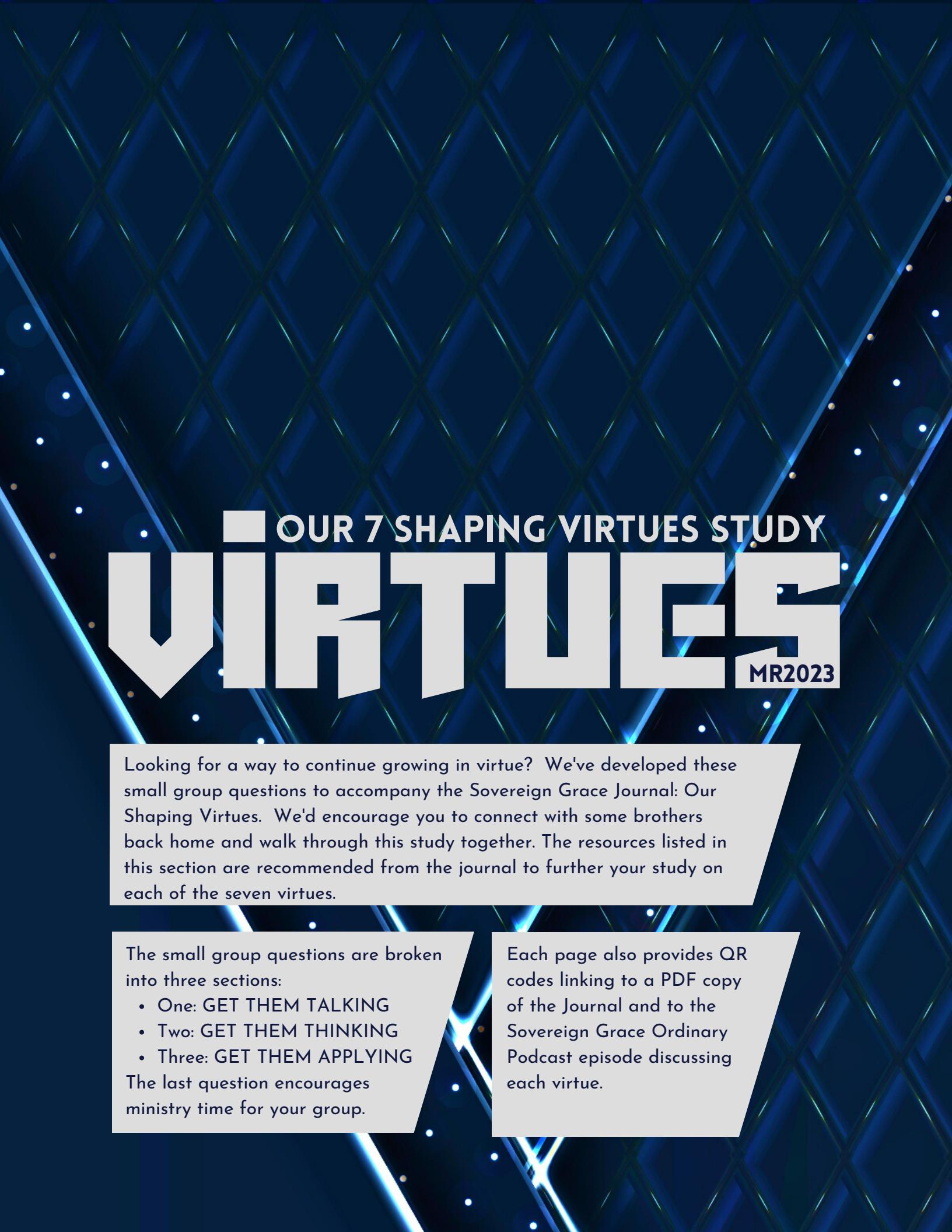
- What are some things the Lord might have you share with your wife, parents, or friends?
- What are some things you'd like to change with your relationship with your wife, kids, parents, or grandchildren?

8 Spend some time praying about how you might grow as a result of what you experienced at the retreat.



SOUTHEAST REGIONAL ASSEMBLY OF ELDERS

- Sovereign Grace Church - Prattville, AL
 - Matt Turner, Robert Jacobson
- Crossway Community Church - Crestview, FL
 - Jim Brown
- Grace Church - Gotha, FL
 - Wayne Brooks, Josh Murphy
- Redeemer Church - Orlando, FL
 - Benny Phillips, Jesse Phillips
- Risen Life Church - Melbourne, FL
 - Keith Bunting, Rich Malone
- Sovereign Grace Church - LaGrange, GA
 - Russell Tusing
- Sovereign Grace Church - Woodstock, GA
 - Aaron Anderson, Philip Friesen
- Christ Community Church - Covington, LA
 - Jeff Ehrhardt, (Provisional: Keith Collins, Pete Schefferstein)
- Lakeview Christian Center - New Orleans, LA
 - Keith Collins, Peter Davidson, Frank Loria, Steve Roberts, Phil Widener
- Kingdom Life Church - Nassau, Bahamas
 - Cedric Moss
- Grace Family Church - St. Catharine, Jamaica
 - Joel Bain, Sheldon Campbell, Sean Taylor



■ OUR 7 SHAPING VIRTUES STUDY

VIRTUES

MR2023

Looking for a way to continue growing in virtue? We've developed these small group questions to accompany the Sovereign Grace Journal: Our Shaping Virtues. We'd encourage you to connect with some brothers back home and walk through this study together. The resources listed in this section are recommended from the journal to further your study on each of the seven virtues.

The small group questions are broken into three sections:

- One: GET THEM TALKING
- Two: GET THEM THINKING
- Three: GET THEM APPLYING

The last question encourages ministry time for your group.

Each page also provides QR codes linking to a PDF copy of the Journal and to the Sovereign Grace Ordinary Podcast episode discussing each virtue.



Come prepared to talk with other brothers about your experience at the Men's Retreat. Consider some of your answers to the Truck Stop questions from your ride down as well as some of your answers to your personal devotion time. Here are some things to keep in mind when engaging with the guys in your small group.

GOSPEL + SAFETY + TIME = A CHURCH WHERE ANYONE CAN GROW

RAY ORTLAND, THE GOSPEL COALITION | SEPTEMBER 24, 2020

Gospel + safety + time. It's what everyone needs.
A lot of gospel + a lot of safety + a lot of time.

Gospel: good news for bad people through the finished work of Christ on the cross and the endless power of the Holy Spirit. Multiple exposures. Constant immersion. Wave upon wave of grace and truth, according to the Bible.

Safety: a non-accusing environment. No embarrassing anyone. No cornering anyone. No shaming. But respect and sympathy and listening and understanding, so that people can exhale and open up and unburden their souls. A church environment where no one seeking the Lord has anything to fear.

Time: no pressure. Not even self-imposed pressure. No deadlines on growth. Urgency, but not hurry, because no one changes quickly. A lot of "space" for complicated people to rethink their lives at a deep level. God is patient.

This is what our churches must be:
gentle environments of gospel + safety + time.
It's where we're finally free to grow.



[HTTPS://WWW.THEGOSPELCOALITION.ORG/BLOGS/RAY-ORTLUND/GOSPEL-SAFETY-TIME/](https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/ray-ortlund/gospel-safety-time/)

HUMILITY VIRTUES

MR2023

1 Who are some people in your life who have modeled humility well? What are some examples of ways you've seen humility at work in their lives?



QUESTIONS ADAPTED FOR:
SOVEREIGN GRACE JOURNAL
OUR SHAPING VIRTUES
OCTOBER 2022
CHAPTER 2 - HUMILITY

FOR FURTHER STUDY:



ORDINARY PASTOR S2-E2:
SHAPING VIRTUES - HUMILITY

- 2** What are the perils of pride and how does pride negatively impact our lives, our church, and our community?
- 3** How does focusing on the attributes of God help us grow in humility?
- 4** What are spiritual disciplines and how do they play a role in cultivating humility?
- 5** In what ways do you think it is important to distinguish biblical principles from individual practices when it comes to humility?

6 In what ways have you personally struggled with pride in your life?

7 How can we cultivate a humble attitude towards others, especially those who may be different from us or have opposing viewpoints?

8 What are some practical steps you'd like to take to grow in humility this next year? How can other brothers from your church support and encourage you in your pursuit of humility?

9 What needs have you discerned during your discussion time? Pray for one another for the Lord to personally meet each of you in these specific needs.

JOY

VIRTUES

- 1** What songs come to mind when you think about joy? Write down as many songs you can think of with the word "joy" in the title or lyrics. You have one minute.



QUESTIONS ADAPTED FOR:
SOVEREIGN GRACE JOURNAL
OUR SHAPING VIRTUES
OCTOBER 2022
CHAPTER 3 - JOY

FOR FURTHER STUDY:



ORDINARY PASTOR S2-E3:
SHAPING VIRTUES - JOY

- 2** How would you define joy? How is joy different from happiness?
- 3** Why are followers of Christ to be known for our joy?
- 4** What does it mean to "rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory" even in the midst of trials? How can we find joy in suffering for Christ's sake?
- 5** What is the relationship between joy and obedience to God? How can obeying God bring us joy?

- 6** Would you characterize your life as a life of joy?
Why or why not?

- 7** What are some practical ways that you've found helpful for finding joy in difficult circumstances?

- 8** How can you grow in delighting in God in your daily life? What are some practical steps you can take to experience and cultivate joy in your life and church?
How can you encourage one another in this?

- 9** What are some scripture passages that spark joy for you? Have each of your group members share one of these verses and consider praying these verses at the end of your time together.

GRATITUDE

VIRTUES

MR2023

- 1** Can you think of someone in your life who you are grateful for? What is one specific thing you appreciate about this person?



QUESTIONS ADAPTED FOR:
SOVEREIGN GRACE JOURNAL
OUR SHAPING VIRTUES
OCTOBER 2022
CHAPTER 4 - GRATITUDE

FOR FURTHER STUDY:



ORDINARY PASTOR S2-E4:
SHAPING VIRTUES - GRATITUDE

- 2** What are some common challenges that we may face in trying to give thanks in all circumstances? How do these challenges impact our ability to express gratitude towards God and others?
- 3** How does ingratitude towards God reveal a fundamental issue at the heart of fallen humanity?
- 4** In what ways can expressing gratitude towards God have practical benefits in our daily lives?
- 5** How does busyness and the distractions of daily life affect our ability to cultivate gratitude?

- 6** Who are the people in your life who know you best?

Would they describe you as a grateful person?

Why or why not?

- 7** What are some specific things you can do to remember God's goodness and faithfulness to cultivate a greater heart of gratefulness?

- 8** What are some specific ways we can encourage one another to pursue greater hearts of gratitude?

- 9** Spend time in prayer. Consider expressing gratitude to the Lord in specific ways for the people in your group.

ENCOURAGEMENT

VIRTUES

MR2023

- 1** Share about a time you felt encouraged. Who encouraged you and what made that experience memorable for you?



QUESTIONS ADAPTED FOR:
SOVEREIGN GRACE JOURNAL
OUR SHAPING VIRTUES
OCTOBER 2022
CHAPTER 5 - ENCOURAGEMENT

FOR FURTHER STUDY:



[ORDINARY PASTOR S2-E5:
SHAPING VIRTUES - ENCOURAGEMENT](#)

- 2** What comes to mind when you think of God as an encouraging God?
- 3** How would you define biblical encouragement? How is this different from worldly encouragement?
- 4** What is the ministry of Scripture and how is it the primary means we are to bring encouragement?
- 5** What are common hindrances to encouragement? How does the gospel address each of these hindrances?

- 6** What does your pattern of encouragement look like in your own life?

- 7** Which hindrances to encouragement do you find most particular for you? Pride, flaw-finder, truth-teller, mind-to-mouth challenge, awkwardness, out of practice, etc.

- 8** What are some specific ways we can encourage one another to grow in practicing biblical encouragement?

- 9** Share an evidence of grace you see in one of your group members with the group. Conclude by praying for one another.

GENEROSITY

- 1 Who are some historical figures known for their generosity? What do you think motivated their generosity?



QUESTIONS ADAPTED FOR:
SOVEREIGN GRACE JOURNAL
OUR SHAPING VIRTUES
OCTOBER 2022
CHAPTER 6 - GENEROSITY

FOR FURTHER STUDY:



ORDINARY PASTOR S2-E6: **SHAPING VIRTUES - GENEROSITY**

- 2** Why is it that gospel people should be generous people?
What is a believer's motivation for generosity?
 - 3** Generosity doesn't just include our finances. What are other ways the Lord calls us to be generous?
 - 4** What role does joy play in our generosity? What is the reward for generous giving?
 - 5** What does it look like to give sacrificially, while also ensuring you are stewarding well what the Lord has given you?

- 6** What lies might you be prone to believe in thinking about generosity?

7 Thinking about your resources, time, energy, and attention - what are some ways you think the Lord may be calling you to be more generous?

8 Think of some ministries within your church or that your church supports (children's ministry, youth ministry, church ushers, benevolence ministry, church-sponsored women's shelter or food bank, Rancho 3M, Sovereign Grace Churches, etc.). Pray for these ministries together. How might the Lord use these ministries to help you grow in generosity.

SERVANTHOOD

VIRTUES

MR2023

- 1** Who are some butlers or nannies from movies or television shows you remember watching? Do you remember any funny moments?



QUESTIONS ADAPTED FOR:
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CHAPTER 7 - SERVANTHOOD

FOR FURTHER STUDY:



ORDINARY PASTOR S2-E7:
SHAPING VIRTUES - SERVANTHOOD

- 2** What comes to mind when you think about servanthood and what it means to be a servant?
- 3** Besides Jesus, who are some of your favorite examples of servants in the Bible?
- 4** What does it mean to love your neighbor as yourself and how does that relate to servanthood?
- 5** What are some ways we can avoid turning servanthood into an idol?

- 6** How have you benefited from someone practically serving you?

- 7** What are some hindrances that keep us from pursuing a servanthood lifestyle?

- 8** What are some ways you can grow in your love for God that will lead to a greater heart for serving others?

- 9** Who is someone in your life the Lord may be calling you to serve better? Share this with the group and take some time praying together for the Lord to show you ways to better care for them.

GODLINESS VIRTUES

MR2023

- 1** If you could master any weapon, what would you choose and why?



QUESTIONS ADAPTED FOR:
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CHAPTER 8 - GODLINESS

FOR FURTHER STUDY:



[ORDINARY PASTOR S2-E8:
SHAPING VIRTUES - GODLINESS](#)

- 2** What is superficial godliness? How is superficial godliness different from godliness that pleases God?
- 3** How does our identity as a believer inform our practice of godliness?
- 4** Define these two theological words: Justification and Sanctification. How do they relate to godliness?
- 5** John Owen writes, "Be killing sin or it will be killing you." What does this mean in light of our pursuit of godliness?

- 6** How does the truth of who Jesus is and what he has done for you inform your approach to godliness?

- 7** Of the three gospel weapons shared in the article (meditation, confession, community), which would you like to see yourself wield better?

- 8** Share what your fight for godliness looks like. How can you encourage one another with the gospel and help one another in this fight?

- 9** Pray for one another and what your next steps look like following this study. Pray about ways you can continue to be shaped by these virtues for your good, the good of your church, and God's glory.

JOURNAL RESOURCES

VIRTUES

MR2023

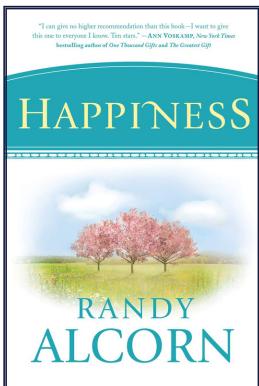


RESOURCES FROM:
SOVEREIGN GRACE JOURNAL
OUR SHAPING VIRTUES
OCTOBER 2022 | RECOMMENDED READING



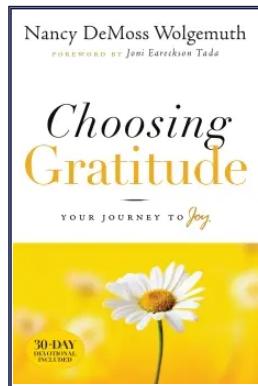
FOR FURTHER STUDY:
PODCAST
ORDINARY PASTOR S2-E9:
SHAPING VIRTUES - RESOURCES

JOY



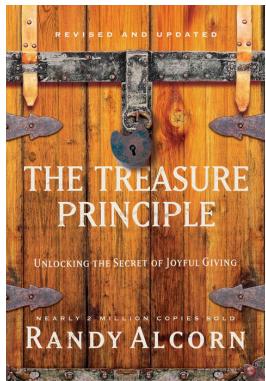
HAPPINESS
RANDY ALCORN

GRATITUDE



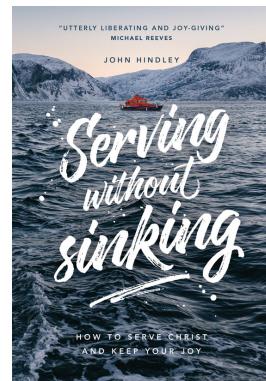
**CHOOSING
GRATITUDE**
NANCY DEMOSS WOLGEMUTH

GENEROSITY



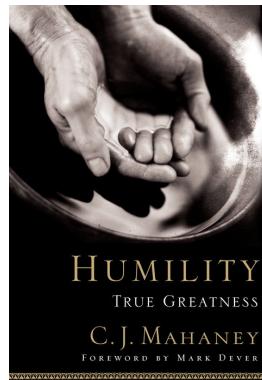
**THE TREASURE
PRINCIPLE**
RANDY ALCORN

SERVANTHOOD



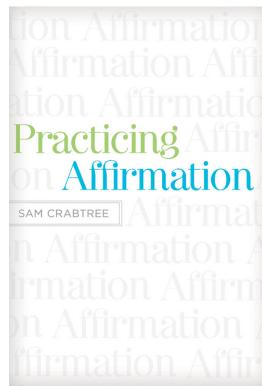
**SERVING
WITHOUT SINKING**
JOHN HINDLEY

HUMILITY



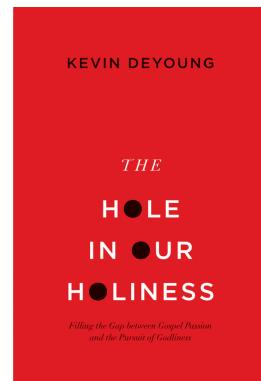
HUMILITY
TRUE GREATNESS
C.J. MAHANEY
Foreword by Mark Dever

ENCOURAGEMENT



**PRACTICING
AFFIRMATION**
SAM CRABTREE

GODLINESS



**THE
HOLE
IN OUR
HOLINESS**
KEVIN DEYOUNG

NOTES



NOTES

