PERSONAL & SMALL GROUP EQUIPPING

Wholehearted Living



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How to use this material

Wholehearted Living is one of a trio of 6-8 week interactive team experiences exploring what it means to live and lead in the context of wholehearted community.

Wholehearted Living – 6 weeks Wholehearted Relating – 6 weeks (additional 2-week bridge if this is your first module) Wholehearted Leading – 6 weeks (additional 2-week bridge if this is your first module)

Already completed a Wholehearted experience?

Teams where all members have previously completed another module of the Wholehearted trio that included the 2-week Bridge can begin with Week 3 of this material.

Your Day, Your Way

Your relationship with God is deeply personal and as unique as you are yourself. We understand there is no one-size-fits-all approach to engaging with God through Scripture.

To help you make the most of your time in this discipleship course, we've provided a variety of options to fit your needs and schedule. We call it Your Day, Your Way.

First, each day's Spirit Guided Reflection including Scripture passages and reflection questions, is provided in both text and audio format (on the digital platform). You can type your response or speak your responses using a device with a talk to text keyboard.

Second, each daily reflection is broken down into four main sections. You can follow a single-sitting approach and do the reflection all at once and it will take you about 15-20 minutes. Or, if a lesson is particularly impactful and you have time, you may choose to answer some of the Taking it Deeper questions for a slightly longer reflection experience.

But, if you're short on time, you can customize your experience, working through one or two sections and then returning throughout the day, as you have time, for further reflection. This gives you the opportunity to meditate over an extended period of time in bite-sized pieces.

To help you decide what works best for you, here's some information on how the daily reflections are set up.

Awareness of God

If you're in a hurry it might be tempting to skip over this part and move to the Scripture passage. But if you do you'll miss out! The Awareness of God section is a practice in mindfulness, of becoming fully present to your own heart and connecting with God's heart through prayerful contemplation. It only takes a minute or two but sets you up for a more meaningful experience. If you're breaking up each day's reflection, you may even want to use the Awareness of God section as the kick-off to your morning.

Encountering God in Scripture

This will include a brief Scripture passage and a couple of reflection questions designed to take you below the surface of what you're reading to engage with Scripture at a whole heart level. This means you'll be considering not just what you think a passage is saying, but also how you feel about it, what deep desires the passage is touching in you, and how you feel God leading you to respond. If you're taking the non-traditional approach you may decide to break up this section by listening to and meditating on the Scripture at the start of the day and then coming back to answer questions after you've had a while to consider them.

Commit Yourself

This is where you apply the Scripture and concepts to your real-life situations.

Prepare to Move Out

This is like a final charge as you move out into the day – reminding you of the good work God is doing in you and giving you courage to stay in the battle for the wellspring of your heart.

At the end of each day there is a wrap up question that asks you to consider what was most significant from that day's reflection. This question is important for 3 reasons:

- It gives you an opportunity to pause and consider how you've been impacted by the reflection. Without this last step it's easy to miss some of the threads God is weaving together.
- It is helpful in preparing for the team meeting. Rather than reviewing each day's content in preparation for your meeting, you can go back and look at just that single question from each day.
- Your answer from this question is shared with your team (if answered on the digital platform). This gives you the chance to see how others in your team are being impacted by the week's material and creates space for you to dialogue within your team using the chat feature. Unless otherwise noted, this is the only question from your reflections that is shared with the team. All your other answers remain private.

It's your day. Design it your way for an impactful, wholehearted engagement with God.

Team Meetings

Team meetings are an essential part of the Wholehearted experience. We are created to live in community, and you will experience more sustained growth by walking through this material with the support of others.

Each module begins with an Introductory Team Meeting.

Each week of material concludes with a Team Meeting where you will share your significant takeaways and the impact you are seeing as God applies what you are learning to your life. Suggested length in included in each Team Meeting.

Wholehearted Living: INTRODUCTORY Team Meeting

Before you meet (all team members)

 Members should view the video "Becoming Wholehearted?"



INTRODUCTORY Team Meeting Objectives

- Get to know your team members.
- Express hopes for what you will experience in this course.
- Reflect on what it means to live Wholehearted.

Getting to Know You (20 mins)

- Introduce yourself by sharing your name and how you learned about this Wholehearted building block experience.
- What do you hope to experience through this journey?
- What is your perspective on what it means to live wholehearted?

Teaching Video and Discussion (25 mins)



Together, watch the "Wholehearted Life" Video.

Discussion:

- What was most significant to you about the video?
- What do you think about the idea that our deepest desires are like a GPS leading us home to God?
- How does the concept that living from a whole heart involves three connections – to your own heart, to God's heart, and to the hearts of others – strike you?

Skills Video and Discussion (25 mins)

Together, watch the Elevator Model Video.



Take a moment to review the Elevator of the Heart model and the Feelings and Desires charts on the next three pages.

 How would you describe where you are on the journey toward living from all four levels of your heart (aware of your deep desires, feelings, and thoughts and making choices out of your deep desires that are intended to draw you to God)?



- Which level/s do you most often live from? Which are you least in touch with?
- What do you think would be the potential impact if you lived more fully from all four levels of your heart?

Looking Ahead and Wrapping Up (10 mins)

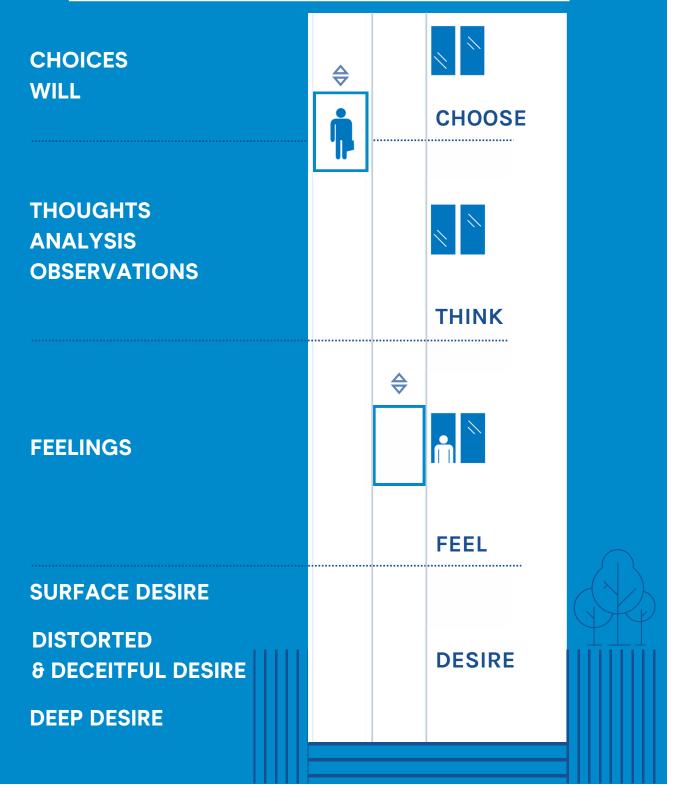
Overview of your Week One Spirit Guided Reflections.

- On the digital platform, the video each week is required in order to unlock the rest of the material as it forms a base for the rest of the weeks' reflections.
- Each day has 5 questions to guide you through a scripture passage and your response to God's word. Your answers to these questions will be private to you.
- On the digital platform, your most significant takeaway each day will post to a team discussion board where you can respond to each other if you choose.
- There is a Digging Deeper section each day that will invite you into further reflection if you choose.
- Each day's reflection will take approximately 15-20 minutes to complete or 20-30 if you do the Digging Deeper questions.

Practicing responding from your whole heart.

To wrap up, take a moment to get in touch with how you've experienced the meeting. Identify and share 2-3 feeling words that describe your experience. You can use your Feelings chart to help you.

THE ELEVATOR MODEL OF THE HEART



Feelings Chart

IDENTIFY FEELING WE EXPERIENCE AS POSITIVE

Peaceful	Joyful	Empowered	Authentic	Grateful	Loved
Comfortable Secure Calm Relaxed Trusting Safe Protected Content Sure Certain Patient	Refreshed Stimulated Creative Encouraged Pleased Happy Full Free Delighted Thrilled Elated	Strong Capable Energetic Hopeful Inspired Respected Significant Successful Valuable Confident Gifted	Real True Honest Direct Loyal Faithful Aware Seen Heard Known Glorious	Satisfied Sentimental Nostalgic Humbled Thoughtful Blessed Thankful Whole Healed Full Awed	Considered Seen Loved/Loving Intimate Connected Desirable Beautiful Adored Kind Nurturing Trusted
	Exhilirated	Strong			Delighted in

IDENTIFY FEELING WE EXPERIENCE AS NEGATIVE

Fearful	Sad	Confused	Angry	Ashamed	Lonely
Shy Cautious Hesitant Insecure Anxious Tense	Down Bored Burdened Somber Disappointed Tired	Overwhelmed Bewildered Torn Stunned Curious Uncertain	Hurt Resentful Ticked Cynical Skeptical Annoyed	Bashful Embarrassed Awkward Clumsy Uncomfortable Flustered	Left out Invisible Out of place Disconnected Distant Excluded
Nervous Troubled Distressed Scared Horrified Helpless Agitated Shocked Alarmed Numb	Dissatisfied Discouraged Grieved Depressed Defeated Empty Miserable Despairing Devastated Undone	Ambivalent Doubtful Unsettled Hesitant Perplexed Puzzled Distracted Flustered Fragmented Lost	Frustrated Fed up Indignant Jealous Disgusted Hostile Furious Critical Contemptuous Enraged	Foolish Weak Inadequate Self-conscious Diminished Chagrined Remorseful Guilty Humiliated Mortified	Isolated Unwanted Rejected Despised Abandoned Desolate Forsaken

Types of Desires

Surface Desires

Surface desires are connected to deep desires and are the most easily recognized and accessible desires.

MATERIAL	EXPERIENTIAL	POSITIONAL	RELATIONAL
money, a new car, house, jewelry, clothes, toys	a vacation, climb a mountain, walk in the woods, romance, sports, recreation, achievements, mother, father, husband, wife	mother, father, husband, wife, particular job or title in your vocation, avocation or ministry	friendship, family, spouse, work

Deceptive Desires

Deceptive desires are surface desires we mistakenly believe will fully satisfy a deep desire when we seek their fulfillment apart from God.

(Example: a promotion will provide a sense of significance)

Distorted Desires

Distorted desires are surface desires that we actively seek to fulfill, even subconsciously, apart from utter dependence on God. They are often evidenced by controlling and grasping behavior as we seek to meet our own desires.

(Example: manipulating people or situations to get what you desire rather than trusting God with the deepest desires of your heart)

Deepest Desires

Deep desires arise out of the image of God in you. They draw you to God and can only be fully satisfied through union with God.

PURPOSE to be part of something larger, transcendence, glory	RELATIONSHIP connection, love/ be loved, pursue and be pursued, community	IMPACT significance	HONOR respect	KNOWN & VALUED understood, heard, seen	SECURITY safety, to protect and provide, be protected and provided for
DUTY to come through, to hear well done	BEAUTY & CREATIVITY to experience and create beauty	JUSTICE for right to prevail, to see all human beings valued and respected	FREEDOM right and capacity to freely choose	PEACE & REST wholeness, completion, home, order	JOY pleasure, satisfaction from desires met

Week 1

Your purpose as a human being

REFLECTION QUESTION

How does living wholehearted relate to my purpose as a human being?

Overview video



To be completed prior to the first day's reflection -"Created in the image of God" video.

You are not here by accident. You have been created, in God's image, with purpose and intent. Your heart, the wellspring of life, is critical to you fulfilling your purpose and experiencing fullness of life in Christ. It is the channel through which you intimately connect with God's heart to experience his love and intimately connect with the hearts of others to whom you express God's love. This is wholehearted living. This is what it means to be fully alive. And it is not only possible, it is what you were made for.

Response

Answer after viewing the video.

How does living wholehearted relate to my purpose as a human being?

Day 1

Spirit guided reflection – Created out of love for love

Day 2

Spirit guided reflection -Created for connection

Day 3

Spirit guided reflection – Your heart makes intimate connection possible

Day 4

Spirit guided reflection – Disconnected hearts, disconnected lives

Day 5

Review and Preparation for Team Meeting

Week 1 Day 1

REFLECTION QUESTION

How does living wholehearted relate to my purpose as a human being?

DAY 1 OVERVIEW

Created out of love for love

Awareness of God and Yourself

As you come to God's Word, let yourself rest in his presence as you begin. Jesus longs to tarry with you during this time. Choose to abide in him by turning your attention fully to Jesus. Release any distractions and the worries of the day into his care so you can fully receive from him.

In the quietness of this moment, hear Jesus' invitation to you today: "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." (John 15:4).

Encounter God and Yourself in Scripture

Of all the questions humans ask, perhaps one of the most compelling is Does my life have meaning? Or, another way of putting it – Why am I here?

Human beings have wrestled with these questions for centuries, and yet from the very first pages in Genesis 1, God answers these questions. He shares his desire for image bearers who would have dominion over all creation. From a place of abiding with Jesus, look at Genesis 1:26-27 and allow Jesus to speak to you through this passage. As you read it, prayerfully consider how it speaks to the deep cries of the human heart.

What do we discover from this passage about God's desire for human beings?

God makes human beings his representatives, responsible for spreading his glory throughout the earth. The astounding reality of being human is this: God does not need us but he chooses to be glorified through us because of his love for us.

What does it say to you about God's heart toward human beings?

Commit Yourself

Dr. John H. Walton in the NIV Application Commentary on Genesis says this about being created in the image of God (p 131 structure and emphasis added):

"The image is a physical manifestation of divine (or royal) essence that bears the *function* of that which it represents; this gives the image-bearer the capacity to reflect the attributes (love, faithfulness, justice, wisdom, etc.) of the one represented and act on his behalf."

How does it strike you that as God's image bearer you have the capacity to

reflect God's attributes or character?

• to act on his behalf?

God, who is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, is love. The Father and the Son love one another in the unity of the Spirit without end. In the beginning God's love overflowed to creation. He intimately formed Adam and Eve by hand, created them in his image, and breathed his very life into them (Gen 2:7). Then he crowned them with glory and the honor of ruling on his behalf (Psalm 8:5-6).

What is this glory the psalmist refers to? In Exodus 33 we see Moses' appeal to God to "show me your glory" (vs 18). And God replies "I will cause all my goodness to pass in front of you…" In simple terms, God's glory flows from his character full of goodness, love, grace, and truth..

As human beings we were created out of love, to be loved, so that we can love. As we do, we reveal God's very character and become a display of his glory.

Pause for a moment and consider that you were created out of love, to be loved, so that you can love. Your purpose is to express God's heart of love among the earth. As you do, try to get in touch with how you feel about this view of being created in God's image. It could be positive or negative. **Use your feelings chart to identify 2-3 words.**

Feelings are like dashboard lights that show us what is going on inside our hearts. They guide us to our deep desires and fears. Using your deep desires chart, try to identify your deep desires that connect to the feeling words you listed. What deep desires are being touched as you consider that you have a part to play in God's Larger Story of creation – that of experiencing his love that you might express his love to others?

Taking it Deeper (optional reflection questions)

Today you have reflected on what it means to be created in the image of God and given the capacity to reveal his character. Pause and consider for a moment what attributes or character traits of God you most long to reveal. **What do you desire for others to know of God through the way you live and relate to others?**

In what ways could you reveal these attributes to those in your sphere of influence?

What would be the potential impact of you consistently living this way?

What was most significant for you in today's reflection? (Shared response with your team if completed online)

Prepare to Move Out

As you move out, carry that sense of abiding with Jesus into your day. You were created in love, to experience God's love, and to express God's love to others. As you abide in Jesus, his love will begin to flow more freely through your life to those around you.

Week 1 Day 2

REFLECTION QUESTION

How does living wholehearted relate to my purpose as a human being?

DAY 2 OVERVIEW

Created for connection

Awareness of God and Yourself

We so often come into the presence of God distracted by the worries of life and the tasks of the day. Take a moment to give each distraction, worry and task to Jesus. As you bring each concern to God, meditate on the words of 1 Peter 5:7, "Give all your worries and cares to God, for he cares about you."

Pay attention to how you feel as you release those things into his care. He is inviting you to sit at his feet as you open your heart to his Word.

Choose to be fully present to the good work he is doing in your heart today.

Encounter God and Yourself in Scripture

Why is it so significant to live wholehearted – fully alive to your own heart, your desires, feelings, thoughts, and choices, and deeply connected to God's heart and the hearts of others? We gain more insight as we return to the Creation story to discover more about the relationship between human beings and their Creator.

Genesis 2 paints an intimate portrait of a God who fashioned human beings by hand, then breathed his very breath in them. The image of God in us gives us the capacity to reveal God's heart, but it is through connection that we fulfill our purpose.

In today's reading of Genesis 1:26-28, 2:7-9, 15-18 (ESV) we will focus on intimacy and connection. Try to pay particular attention to words or phrases that suggest intimacy or relational connection between human beings or between God and human beings.

Genesis 1:26-27, 2:7-9, 15-18 (ESV)

²⁶Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."

²⁷So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

⁷⁻⁹then the LORD God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature. And the LORD God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground the LORD God made to spring up every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

¹⁵⁻¹⁸The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it. And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, "You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die. Then the LORD God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him."

What words or actions can you identify that imply intimacy and relationship or connection? List those here.

What do you observe about the relationship between human beings and between God and human beings?

How do you see these relationships impacting our ability to reveal God's character and rule on his behalf?

Commit Yourself

Pause for a moment and consider your own relationship with God. How would you describe the level of intimacy that exists in your relationship (positive or negative)? How is that impacting your ability to serve as God's image bearer revealing his character, his love, in your sphere of influence?

If you could consistently live from a place of intimate connection with God and experience the overflowing impact that has on those you most care about, what would that be like for you? (Alternately, if you do consistently live that way, what is that like?) Week 1 / Day 2

Taking it Deeper (optional reflection questions)

In Genesis 1 we see God's desire that human beings exercise dominion or rule over creation. Genesis 2:15-18 adds more details about what this looks like. What can you discover in these verses about what it means to have dominion over the earth?

What do you see as the potential impact if human beings actually ruled over creation in a manner consistent with the character of God?

What was most significant for you in today's reflection?

Prepare to Move Out

We are unique among creation – created by the very hands of God to represent him to the world. Move out in the awareness that you are chosen to be part of God's story. Your part matters. You matter. Rest in that truth today.

Week 1 Day 3

REFLECTION QUESTION

How does living wholehearted relate to my purpose as a human being?

DAY 3 OVERVIEW

Your heart makes intimate connection possible

Awareness of God and Yourself

As you enter this reflection time, hear the words of Jesus. "If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, 'Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.'" (John 7:37-38 ESV).

Pause and check in with your heart today. Does it feel like the living water of Jesus is flowing freely in your life or are you feeling dry and thirsty? Whatever you are feeling, offer that to Jesus.

Now listen as he speaks these words to you, "...come to me and drink." Let him fill you today.

Encounter God and Yourself in Scripture

Proverbs 4:23 advises

Above all else, guard your heart for it is the wellspring of life. (NIV, 1984 ed)

A wellspring is a channel through which underground water flows to the surface. In contemporary times, it's easy to underestimate the value of a wellspring. But before modern plumbing, a wellspring was a primary source of life-giving water.

In the same way, God created our hearts to be channels through which his life and love flow to the earth. This happens as we connect with God's heart, the source of life, with our whole heart – our desires, feelings, thoughts, and choices. As we then connect with others, this life and love overflows, and God's glory is revealed through us.

Consider your whole heart for a moment – your desires, feelings, thoughts, and choices. **In what way do you see your heart serving as the wellspring of your life?**

Commit Yourself

In ancient times, if a wellspring was blocked or shut down, it no longer served as a source of life-giving water. That's why wells were closely guarded. In the same way, if parts of our hearts are shut down, cut off from the source of life, it brings death. Maybe not in the physical sense, but in our overall spiritual and emotional well-being. Shut down areas are places where God's love does not fully penetrate our hearts. We often don't even realize we have these areas until we react, under pressure, in ways that do not reflect the character of Christ.

What is the potential impact on you if parts of your heart are shut down or disconnected? The potential impact to God and others?

What is the potential impact of living from a whole heart that is fully open to God's love and overflowing to those around you?

Pause and reflect on your last response and try to identify what is going on in your heart at all four levels. What would you like to share with God about your feelings, desires, thoughts, and choices? Consider expressing the longings of your heart back to God by writing that out as a prayer, psalm, or short journal entry.

Taking it Deeper (optional reflection questions)

As you consider what you wrote above, what do you notice about the connection between our deep desires and intimacy with the Lord?

As you experience deeper intimacy with the Lord, how might that impact your ability to connect deeply with others in your sphere of influence?

What was most significant for you today?

Week 1 / Day 3

Prepare to Move Out

Your heart is the wellspring of your life. It is worth guarding! But you do not guard it alone. God stands with you as the defender and protector of your heart. Remember this truth as you move out today

Week 1 Day 4

REFLECTION QUESTION

How does living wholehearted relate to my purpose as a human being?

DAY 4 OVERVIEW

Disconnected hearts, disconnected lives

Awareness of God and Yourself

God longs to protect you. He is worthy of your trust. Your heart can exult because you are deeply loved.

Pause and let those words take root in your whole heart – your thoughts, feelings, desires, and choices.

Carry that awareness with you as you open your heart to his Word today.

Encounter God and Yourself in Scripture

This week we have explored what it means to live wholehearted, fully alive to your own heart - your desires, feelings, thoughts, and choices - and deeply connected to God's heart and the hearts of others. When we connect to God's heart we can experience his love. And when we connect to others, we can express God's love. As we pursue this wholehearted connection to both God and others, we fulfill our part in revealing God's glory throughout the earth.

Evil despises God's glory, so he is always out to disrupt intimacy, to disconnect us from our hearts, God's heart, and the hearts of others. Moving on to Genesis 3 we see Evil's attack against God's image bearers. At the Fall, the attack is on trust. Could Eve and Adam trust that God's heart was truly good toward them, that his ways were best?

Read Genesis 3:1-13 before answering your reflection questions. As you do, try to pay particular attention to the way the serpent challenged Eve's trust in her Creator.

How does the serpent sow seeds of doubt in Eve's heart about God's goodness towards her?

As Adam and Eve chose to grasp knowledge of good and evil for themselves rather than trust God's heart, disconnection happened on multiple levels. **Where do you see the disconnection in their relationship**

- with God?
- with each other?
- within their own hearts?

Commit Yourself

Though Evil's attack in Genesis 3 was on trust, the temptation came through desire. Eve desired to be like God, knowing good and evil. The deception was in believing she could get that desire met through her own means. Instead of drawing her closer to God, Eve's decision separated her from God. In a similar manner, deceptive desires sabotage our deep desires because they draw us away from God, into independence, rather than towards him.

Pull out your desires chart and review surface, deceptive, and deep desires. Identify one of your deep desires, something that is particularly significant to you such as the desire to be loved, respected, or valued. Consider the ways you try to get that desire met.

In what ways do you perceive you attempt to get that desire met apart from God? (deceptive desires)? Example: trying to make yourself indispensable so others will consider you valuable; clinging to others so you feel loved; controlling loved ones so you feel safe/at peace

*Note, if you have trouble answering this question consider ways in which your behavior negatively impacts others. You will likely find underneath that behavior deceptive desires.

If you allowed God to fully meet that deep desire, what might that look like?

Taking it Deeper (optional reflection questions)

Week 1 / Day 4

Pause for a moment and consider your response to the last question.

How does your response strike you? (What do you think about it?)

What feelings and desires can you get in touch with as you consider your response?

What choice/s, if any, do you sense God might be inviting you to make?

What was most significant for you today?

Prepare to Move Out

Your deepest desires were placed in you by God. They are part of the image of God that you carry, and he longs to meet those desires. Move out today meditating on the words of the psalmist in Psalm 37:4-5, "Delight yourself in the LORD, and he will give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the LORD: trust in him, and he will act."

Week 1 Day 5

REFLECTION QUESTION

How does living wholehearted relate to my purpose as a human being?

DAY 5 OVERVIEW

Review and preparation for team meeting

Awareness of God and Yourself

Pause for a moment and turn your thoughts back to the good journey you have been on this week. God has been pursuing your heart through his Word and his Spirit inside you. Allow yourself to fully take in that truth.

What is happening inside you as you reflect on God's pursuing love?

How do you want to respond to God's pursuit of you today?

If you wish, take a moment and offer God thanks for his pursuit of you.

Encounter God and Yourself in Scripture

When we review and recount the things God is doing in our lives it often brings new insight and understanding. Take a few minutes to review your key takeaways from this week's reflections. **What was most significant for you this week**

- from Scripture?
- from the gray boxes that ask you to note what was most significant in that day?

Commit Yourself

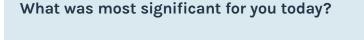
As you consider this week's reflection question: How does living wholehearted relate to your purpose as a human being? **how would you answer that question?**

As you reflect on all that you've discovered this week about being created in God's image, your purpose, and the critical role your heart plays in helping you fulfill your purpose, **what feelings and deep desires can you get in touch with?** What choices would you like to make as you connect to those feelings and deep desires?

Meeting Prep

In preparation for your team meeting, please

- Complete and bring a copy of this review
- Bring a copy of the team meeting agenda
- Watch this brief skills video clip "Three-word state of your heart check-in."



Prepare to Move Out

You have done good work this week in moving towards wholehearted living! Carry the words of thanks you offered to God at the beginning of this reflection into your day. His heart towards you is good. You are deeply loved by the God of the universe. You are valued and pursued. May the overflow of that love pour through your life today as you bring his glory into your world.

Wholehearted Living: Week 1 Team Meeting

Before you meet (all team members)

- · If you have not already, watch Image of God video from Day 1.
- Complete Day 5 Spirit Guided Reflection, including the Three-Word State of Your Heart skills video. Make note of things you want to share with your team.
- Bring a copy of your Day 5 reflection and your team meeting agenda to the meeting.
- Team facilitator consider bringing a printed copy of the Feelings and Desires chart to all team meetings.

Skills Video and Heart Check (20 mins)

If all your team members have not watched the Three-Word State of Your Heart skills video prior to your meeting, please watch it as a group.

BRIEF DISCUSSION:

- Do you have any questions about the Three-Word State of Your Heart?
- Invite each team member to give their own Three-Word State of Your Heart. Focus on identifying 2-3 feeling words that describe how you are in this moment. A copy of the Feelings Chart is located in the Tool Box.
- End with prayer, covering specific needs brought out in the heart check if any arose.

Main Discussion (50 mins)

Each team member will have had the chance to reflect on some of these questions during the meeting preparation (Day 5 Battle Prep). Use this time of sharing as an opportunity to engage around their responses to further draw out the work God is up to in each person's life. The below questions are meant to serve as guides only. Your discussion may take you in a different direction. Follow as the Lord leads.

Objectives

- · Briefly check in with each team member using a Three-Word State of Your Heart.
- Share what was most impactful from each team member's personal reflections.
- Engage around this week's key question: How does living wholehearted relate to your purpose as a human being?

DISCUSSION OF DAILY SPIRIT GUIDED REFLECTIONS

- Review your Day 5 key takeaways. What was most significant for you this week from your personal reflection time? What made it so?
- What was your most meaningful discovery about God's purpose for humankind through the passages and reflections?
- How were you impacted (try to identify feelings and deep desires) by the idea that your purpose is to experience God's love and express his love to others? This could be positive or negative.
- How would you now answer the Week 1 key question: How does living wholehearted relate to your purpose as a human being?
- · What is at stake in our choice to live wholehearted?
- What impact does that realization have on your heart?

Wrap Up (5 mins)

After each person has had a chance to share, take a moment to get in touch with how you've experienced the meeting. Identify and share 2-3 feeling words that describe your experience.

Week 2

From disconnection to restored connection

REFLECTION QUESTION

How does Jesus reconnect us?

Overview video



To be completed prior to the first day's reflection -"A New Heart" video.

You can experience God's perfect love filling the depths of your heart changing the way you act and react. **It starts with discovering and reconnecting your whole heart to God's heart and the hearts of others. This is wholehearted living**, the fullness of life Jesus desires to freely give you.

Response

Answer after viewing the video.

Where do you see yourself disconnecting from God and trying to meet your desires yourself?

Day 1

Spirit guided reflection – A God who pursues reconnection

Day 2

Spirit guided reflection – A God who will restore human beings to glory

Day 3

Spirit guided reflection – Reconnection begins with a changed heart

Day 4

Spirit guided reflection – Jesus' sacrifice reconnects us to the Father

Day 5

Review and Preparation for Team Meeting

Week 2 Day 1

REFLECTION QUESTION

How does Jesus reconnect us?

DAY 1 OVERVIEW

A God who pursues reconnection

Awareness of God and Yourself

As you come into the presence of God today, pause and consider the wonder of how he created you. You bear his image. You were created to reveal the glory of God on this earth.

Reflect on the characteristics of God that you discovered last week: his goodness, his compassion, his love, his mercy. Pause and let this truth sink in: he shares these characteristics with you as his image bearer.

Pause and consider the wonder of that reality.

Encounter God and Yourself in Scripture

Woven into the very fabric of our humanity is the reality that we are created from love, for love so that we might love. To love is to fulfill our purpose as a human being. It is to reveal God's character, his glory, on the earth. The image of God in us gives us the capacity to reveal God to others, but this is only possible when our whole heart is connected to God's whole heart.

So, how could evil disrupt these critical heart connections? By tempting Eve to believe that God's heart towards her was not good. Eve and Adam embraced the mistaken belief that they could meet their own desires outside of an intimate connection with their Creator. The image of God in them shattered and their capacity to reveal his glory was diminished. Disconnection from God's heart, our own hearts and the hearts of others became our fallen condition.

Read Genesis 3:8-24. As you read the curse placed on humanity, what do you discover about the pervasiveness of disconnection?

Even as Adam and Eve fell from glory and God's beautiful world fractured into disharmony, God did not give up on his people. His desire for us was unchanged and God showed deep compassion in his willingness to go to extreme lengths to restore connection with his fallen people.

You observed the impact of disconnection in this passage. But God shows compassion by protecting Adam and Eve from the consequences of living forever in a broken state. Where do you see God's mercy in this passage? How does God continue to protect and pursue his people even in this moment of great loss? Consider listing the examples you discover. As you do, pay attention to your own internal response to God's mercy.

From the moment sin entered the world, God's plan to restore his broken people is revealed with the promise of a Savior in Genesis 3:15. He is the one who would eventually crush the head of the serpent. Even the blood shed to mercifully clothe Adam and Eve points to the necessity of sacrifice to pay for sin. That ultimate sacrifice for humanity's sin would be paid by God himself, in the person of Jesus.

Commit Yourself

In Genesis 3:9 God calls out to his children, "Where are you?" Adam and Eve's first response is to hide. God's first response is to love them by drawing them out of hiding. God always pursues his wayward and lost people in love. He longs for us to draw near, to experience his perfect love which casts out fear. Reconciliation and reconnection have been his goal from the beginning.

In what ways have you experienced God pursuing you, moving toward connection, even in times of brokenness and disconnection?

As you consider God's deep longing for a relationship with you, what feelings can you get in touch with?

What deeper desire might those emotions be pointing to?

Taking it Deeper (optional reflection questions)

When Adam and Eve sinned, their first response was to cover themselves and hide out of fear and shame. Rather than moving toward God, they moved away from him. In a similar manner, fear and shame can lead us to distance ourselves from God and others, to attempt to hide our true selves.

In what ways, if any, are you tempted to hide your true self from God or others?

Week 2 / Day 1

What does God's compassionate response to cover Adam and Eve's nakedness say to you about his willingness and desire to meet you with compassion when you are tempted to hide out of fear or shame?

Pause and consider your answers to the last two questions. Try to get in touch with the deep desires that connect with your answers (example: desire to be loved, known). What deep desires do your answers reflect or touch?

What was most significant for you today?

Prepare to Move Out

To be a person who expresses God's love to others, you must first receive that love for yourself. As you close today, remember that you are seen by God, known by him, and deeply loved. Your sin does not change the depth of his love for you. His love simply is – because you are his child, and you belong to him. Stand today as one who irrevocably belongs to the God who calls you his beloved child. Engage with courage as you bring that love into your spheres of influence. Week 2 / Day 1

Week 2 Day 2

REFLECTION QUESTION

How does Jesus reconnect us?

DAY 2 OVERVIEW

A God who will restore human beings to glory

Awareness of God and Yourself

Center your thoughts on the majesty of God.

Now consider the heavens, the moon, and stars he has set in place.

Along with David, proclaim God's praise, "LORD, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth! You have set your glory in the heavens."

As you offer your own praise to God, seek to be aware of what you are experiencing internally.

Encounter God and Yourself in Scripture

As we saw yesterday, even in our fallen condition, God moved toward humanity. Why? His desire for his glory to be displayed through human beings never changed.

This truth was at the heart of David's poetic rendering of Psalm 8. As you read this psalm, be attentive to what is going on in your heart and how you identify with David's wondering.

Read Psalm 8.

Despite our brokenness and frailty, God's crown of glory and honor has never departed from humanity. Our glory is the unique and royal capacity we have been given to represent and reflect God's glory, heart, and character. Our honor is the royal authority and calling to reflect and represent God to others and creation. But even when we know this truth, our disconnected hearts can make it difficult to believe it.

How or when have you found yourself, like David, questioning your significance, your identity, or your purpose – your own version of "Who am I that you would care for me?"

How do verses 5-8 speak to or answer your questions?

Commit Yourself

The promise of Psalm 8 is even in our frailty, God is glorified. If this is true, then God meets our deepest questions with a reality-altering answer. He does not despise our weakness but instead works through it when we live in close, intimate connection with him.

What is the relationship you see in your own life between intimate connection with God and being a display of God's glory – his love, grace, and truth – to those in your sphere of influence?

How does it impact you to consider that even when you feel weak and painfully aware of your brokenness you are still crowned with the glory of the image of God in you and given the honor of representing God in your domain (sphere of influence)?

Considering all you are discovering about purpose, being a display of God's glory, and the significance of intimate connection with God, what response, if any, do you feel stirring inside you?

Taking it Deeper (optional reflection questions)

In Psalm 8:4 David asks, "...what is mankind that you are mindful of them?" The underlying image is that as "God calls to mind his human creatures it sparks such a longing for them that he must seek them out and lavish care on them."¹

What would it look like to experience God's lavish care in your life?

Using your feelings chart, try to identify 2-3 words that describe how you feel as you consider your responses to the last question.

What deep desires do your responses reflect (use your desires chart)?

What was most significant for you today?

Prepare to Move Out

As his image bearer, you have indeed been crowned with glory and honor. Regardless of what may face you today, regardless of how small or broken you may feel, God remembers you and is coming for you. He chooses to lavish his care upon you and to empower you to reveal his glory right where you are today. Move out today confident in this truth.

Week 2 Day 3

REFLECTION QUESTION

How does Jesus reconnect us?

DAY 3 OVERVIEW

Reconnection begins with a changed heart

Awareness of God and Yourself

Even after the Fall, God's purpose for us never changed, but that purpose can only be realized through connection to God's heart where we experience God's love. What does this kind of intimate connection with God look like for you today?

What are you longing to receive from him during this reflection time? As you feel led, offer that desire back to God.

Encounter God and Yourself in Scripture

The heart is deceitful and beyond cure. Who can understand it? Jeremiah 17:9

Human beings were created for connection. But after the Fall, we lived disconnected, even from our own hearts. As a result, God's glory, expressed through the wellspring of our hearts, was diminished.

In today's passage, Jeremiah shows the impact of this disconnection as he draws us to the repeating cycle that emerges in the Old Testament:

- God's pursuing love ransoms Israel from slavery.
- He calls Israel to respond by loving and obeying him with their whole hearts. This is particularly highlighted in Deuteronomy 30:6 when Israel is instructed to "circumcise" their whole hearts in order to cut away anything that prevents them from loving and obey their God who loved them first.
- Israel repeatedly rebels against the God who offers them covenantal love and faithfulness.
- In light of their rebellion and failure to love God with their whole hearts, God raised up and sent prophets to call Israel to return to God with their whole hearts.

How could Israel run to idols when God was offering such lavish love? Because simply knowing about God's love is not enough. We must experience that love in every part of our heart. For this to happen, something had to change within the heart of human beings. Jeremiah speaks of this change in Jeremiah 31:33-34. As you read this passage notice the movement from an external covenant written on stone to an internal one written on our whole hearts. This experience speaks of "the most intimate knowledge between two persons who are wholly committed to one another in a relationship that touches mind, emotion and will." ² The love of God in Christ written on the human heart empowers us to truly become a wellspring overflowing with his sacrificial love.

Read Jeremiah 31:33-34.

The new covenant, inaugurated through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, makes it possible for our hearts to be reintegrated. In this passage, how do you see the new covenant impacting all four levels of the heart by...

- Changing the way we think?
- Satisfying our deep desires?
- Impacting our feelings as our desires are satisfied?
- Affecting what we choose?

Commit Yourself

Our sin causes us to move away from connection unless God intervenes in love. Just like in the Garden of Eden, it all comes down to trusting his heart towards us and embracing the gift of grace given through Jesus Christ. Every time we experience his love, our hearts believe the truth of his goodness more fully, and connection is deepened.

How might experientially knowing the Father's love move you toward greater trust in him and empower you to fulfill your purpose?

Using the scale below, to what extent do you perceive you "know" the Father's love in the depths of your whole heart? (Example: you experience God's love touching/satisfying your deepest desire to be loved, you feel loved, you know at a rational/thinking level you are loved, and you make choices based out of your experience of God's love)?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Rarely believe		As often as not		Rarely doubt God's love					

Pause and consider your answer to the last question.

How well do you consider your choices in life – priorities, behaviors, spiritual growth, the way you relate to God and others – match your answer?

(Example – if you gave yourself a "7" does your behavior, 70% of the time, reflect that you believe you are God's loved child with whom he is well pleased?)

Taking it Deeper (optional reflection questions)

When our behavior doesn't match our stated beliefs, there is an internal disconnection between what we think we believe and what we truly believe at all four levels of the heart. These often occur because of blockages that keep us from fully experiencing God's love. If we fully believe in the depths of our hearts that God loves us, then our actions and behaviors reflect that. We will never be fully made perfect this side of eternity. But we can begin to close the disconnect between our stated beliefs and the gut-level beliefs we live from as we come to "know" more fully God's love.

If you answered below a 9 on the question related to knowing God's love, what do you think keeps you from more fully knowing God's love?

How does it make you feel to consider that God has given you a heart that is capable of intimately knowing him, including his unconditional love?

What deep desires would it satisfy in you if you could experientially know God's love in increasing measure?

Week 2 / Day 3

What was most significant for you today?

Prepare to Move Out

As you move out today, remember that you are deeply loved. As you experience God's love in your whole heart – the impact will be tremendous. As the wellspring of his love overflows in you, it will touch every part of your world with his goodness, grace, and mercy. Walk in the boldness that comes from receiving your belovedness today.

Week 2 Day 4

REFLECTION QUESTION

How does Jesus reconnect us?

DAY 4 OVERVIEW

Jesus' sacrifice reconnects us to the Father

Awareness of God and Yourself

As you enter the presence of the Lord today, reflect on yesterday's passage from Jeremiah 31:33, "For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people."

God did this for you through Jesus Christ. Allow that truth to wash over you.

As you reflect on this truth, try to identify the feelings it evokes in you. Offer those to God, whether positive or negative.

Encounter God and Yourself Through Scripture

In Jeremiah 31, God promised that a time was coming when he would write his law on our whole hearts, restoring connection to his whole heart. Through that restored connection, we could once again live out our purpose as channels of his love, grace, and mercy.

But for this to become reality, our humanity needed to be redeemed, the image of God in us restored. This was something we could not do on our own. We needed a Savior. Through his perfect life, sacrificial death, and triumphant resurrection, Jesus ushered in the new covenant. By covering us with his righteousness, Jesus made perfect those who are being made holy.

As you read today's passages, Hebrews 2:6-9 and Hebrews 10:14-16, pay particular attention to the way Jesus' life and death opened the way to reconnection.

How does Jesus' perfect life and sacrificial death open the door to the restored connection prophesied in Jeremiah?

Hebrews 10:14 says that Jesus sacrifice made perfect (justification) those who are being made holy (sanctification). We are made holy through the ongoing work of the Holy Spirit inside us as he writes the new covenant on our hearts. Unlike the old covenant which emphasized external obedience but could not change the human heart, the new covenant actually works to change us from the inside out.

As you think about the Holy Spirit writing the new covenant on your heart, how does this truth impact you? What feelings are you aware of?

Commit Yourself

Hebrews 10 intentionally points us toward Jeremiah's description of the new covenant so that we understand the revolutionary shift from the old to the new covenant. The new covenant requires the surrender of our whole hearts as we repent and receive the righteousness of Christ. This is an ongoing process of daily surrender as we bring more and more of ourselves under the Lordship of Christ. To what do we surrender? Love. An increasing experience of God's love in the depth of our being, permeating our desires, feelings, thoughts, and choices, is what gives us the energy and courage to live wholehearted – connected to our hearts, God's heart, and the hearts of others.

Despite knowing what we need, many of us struggle with living wholly surrendered to Jesus' love. The pain of life on this side of the Fall can make surrender, even to our loving Savior, a difficult process. We often compartmentalize our lives – surrendering some areas to Jesus while holding tightly to our own control in others.

In what places in your life have you struggled to surrender your whole heart to Jesus?

What do you sense might be holding you back?

God's love cannot transform what it cannot touch. Pause for a moment and consider what it would look like to live wholly surrendered to the love of God. **How might living in this wholehearted manner impact:**

The way you see yourself and your purpose?

The way you relate to others?

The way you lead in your spheres of influence?

Taking it Deeper (optional reflection questions)

Take a moment to reflect on today's Commit section. As you do, what feelings are surfacing in you?

What deep desires can you get in touch with related to those feelings?

How do you feel led to respond?

What was most significant for you today?

Prepare to Move Out

Jesus did what we could not do. He lived wholeheartedly connected to God, himself, and others. By offering us his life through the Holy Spirit at work inside us, he opens the door for us to experience wholehearted living too. Move out in the knowledge that the very life of Christ is yours. As you embrace that life more fully you will live in the glory and honor God created you for.

Week 2 Day 5

REFLECTION QUESTION

How does Jesus reconnect us?

DAY 5 OVERVIEW

Review and preparation for team meeting

Awareness of God and Yourself

As you reflect on this week, offer God thanks for the ways he has pursued you, met you, and invited you. As you allow your heart to engage with his heart, you are being renewed from the inside out. Consider spending a few moments in worship as a response to God's great love for you.

Encounter God and Yourself in Scripture

When we review and recount the things God is doing in our lives it often brings new insight and understanding. Take a few minutes to review your key takeaways from this week's reflections. **What was most significant for you this week**

• from Scripture?

 from the gray boxes that ask you to note what was most significant in that day?

Commit Yourself

As you consider this week's reflection question: How does Jesus reconnect us? **how would you answer that question?**

As you reflect on all that you've discovered this week about God's plan to reconnect us, to restore his fallen image bearers to the honor and glory bestowed on human beings at Creation, what feelings are stirred in you?

What was most significant for you today?

Meeting Prep

In preparation for your team meeting, please

- Complete and bring a copy of this review
- Bring a copy of the team meeting agenda
- Watch this brief skills video clip: "Creating a Context of Safety."

Prepare to Move Out

Your voice matters. As you move towards your team meeting, remember that God still speaks through his children as we love one another well. Be aware of what he might be longing to speak through your life and your words. And listen for what he desires for you to hear through the life and words of your teammates.



Wholehearted Living: Week 2 Team Meeting

Before you meet (all team members)

- If you have not already, watch the Day 1 video.
- Complete Day 5 Spirit Guided Reflection, including the Creating a Context of Safety skills video. Make note of things you want to share with your team.
- Bring a copy of your Day 5 reflection and your team meeting agenda to the meeting.
- Review Elevator Model and Three-Word State of Your Heart.
- Team facilitator consider bringing a printed copy of the Feelings and Desires chart to all team meetings.

Heart Check (15 mins)

- Each team member should give a Three-Word State of Your Heart using the Feeling Chart for reference
- End with prayer, covering specific needs brought out in the heart check if any arose

Skills Video (10 mins)

- If all your team members have not watched the Creating a Context of Safety Skills video prior to your meeting, plan to watch it now.
- Review the Guidelines for Effective Team Meetings in the Appendix.

BRIEF DISCUSSION:

- Have each team member share which guideline they think they will struggle with the most.
- Discuss ideas for how to hold each other accountable in these areas.

Main Discussion (40 mins)

Each team member will have had the chance to reflect on some of these questions during the meeting preparation (Day 5 Battle Prep). Use this time of sharing as an opportunity to engage around their responses to further draw out the work God is up to in each person's life. The below questions are meant to serve as guides only. Your discussion may take you in a different direction. Follow as the Lord leads.

Objectives

- Check in on each team member's state of the heart.
- Create a context of safety in your team.
- Share what was most impactful from each team member's personal reflections.
- Engage around this week's key question: How does Jesus reconnect us?

DISCUSSION OF DAILY SPIRIT GUIDED REFLECTIONS

Week 2 / Team Meeting

- Review your Day 5 key takeaways. What was most significant for you this week from your scripture and from your personal reflection time? What made it so?
- What was your most meaningful discovery about God's pursuit of humanity through the passages and reflections this week?
- How would you now answer the Week 2 key question: How does redemption reconnect us?
- As you consider the cost Jesus paid to restore the connection between you and God, what choices do you want to make moving forward?
- If you don't choose to live from your whole heart, what will the cost be to you? To others? To God?

Wrap Up (5 mins)

After each person has had a chance to share, take a moment to get in touch with how you've experienced the meeting. Identify and share 2-3 feeling words that describe your experience.