

Wish you were
HERE



Small Group Material

Small Group Confession



- We believe in God the Father, Jesus the Son and the Holy Spirit.
- We believe that God the Father, Jesus the Son and the Holy Spirit are with us.
- We believe the Father has made it possible for us to be together today in this group.
- We believe Jesus wants us to care for one another, accept each other without judgment and love each other.
- We are disciples of Jesus and want him to teach us how to live.
- We believe Jesus calls us to be a blessing to each other, the church and the city where we live.
- We believe the Holy Spirit teaches us to listen to each other and to God's Word.
- We believe that by loving one another we achieve God's purposes for our lives
- We believe that Jesus' kingdom is the only hope for the world. Amen

Small Group Rhythm



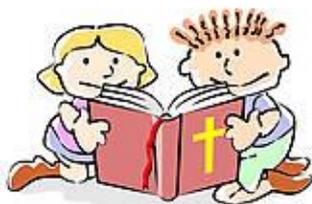
Us to God

- Greet one another
- Light the candle
- Short time of prayer
- Small Group Confession



Person to Person

- What happened in the past week in your life?
- Share highs and lows; celebrate birthdays and other important dates.
- Pray for each other's burdens.



Word Dwelling and Discussion Questions



Prayer

- Give an opportunity for each person express a short prayer.

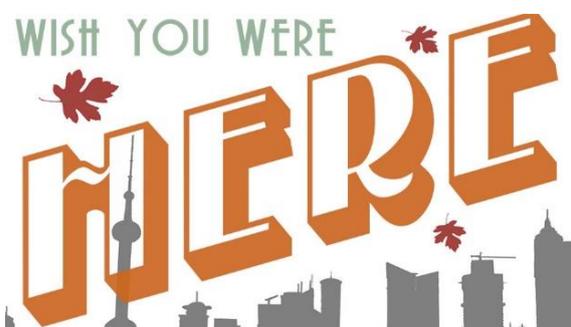
Small Group Meeting 1

From Here to There

To read before ...

Whether blowing out candles or throwing a coin in a fountain, we've all made wishes. They seem like fantasies, but some small part of us holds out hope that they could come true. Some of our wishes are silly and frivolous. But some of them are huge. Sometimes we feel stuck in life. We know where we are, but wish we were somewhere else. How do you turn those big wishes into reality? How do you get from here to there?

MOVING FORWARD God loves you. He has given you freedom to navigate your life. But he has wishes for your life—your future, family, marriage, and career—that are beyond what you can imagine. Your first step on that journey is to surrender to your heavenly Father.



Change Your Mind

(Memorize these verses this week)

⁴ In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy ⁵ because of your partnership in the gospel from

the first day until now, ⁶ being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

Phil 1:4-6

²⁰ Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, ²¹ to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.

Eph 3:20-21

Small Group Meeting 1

Word Dwelling

Philippians 1:4-11

Discussion Questions:

1. What is one thing, large or small, that you've wished for? How did you imagine that the fulfilment of that wish would change your life?
2. What are some reasons that people allow the pursuit of good things to get in the way of God's best for their lives? To what extent do you find yourself choosing good things over God's best?
3. Read Philippians 1:9–11. In what ways do you think loving more could help you know "what is best" in your life? What are some specific ways it would change the way you relate to God and with other people?
4. During the message, we heard, "God's wishes for your future are greater than his worries about your past." Is it difficult for you to believe that statement? Why or why not?
5. There are three reasons people think God may have quit on them: they're worried, they're too comfortable, or they're lonely. Which of these reasons tends to be the biggest obstacle for you? What are some things you can do to overcome that obstacle?
6. What is one thing you can do this week to begin to uncover God's wish for you? What can this group do to support you?

Small Group Meeting 2

Seeing is Believing

To read before ...

No matter where we find ourselves, we all have an area of life where we find ourselves stuck. That is to say, we wish we were somewhere else.

Tired of being stuck and wishing for something different? Discover the one obstacle that keeps us from moving from where we are to where we want to be.

How do you get from where you are to where you wish you were . . . or even where God wishes you were? Even the thought of pursuing the life God wants for you can be scary. It can stir a fight-or-flight response in you. That's because the greatest obstacle to getting to where God wishes you were is how you see you. You see the problems of your past. But God sees the potential for your future.

If there's a difference between the way God sees you, and the way you see yourself, you are the one not seeing straight. To see how God sees, believe what God says. Don't let your self-image get in the way of what God wants to do through you. Believe him! See you how he sees you—as a son or daughter of the King.



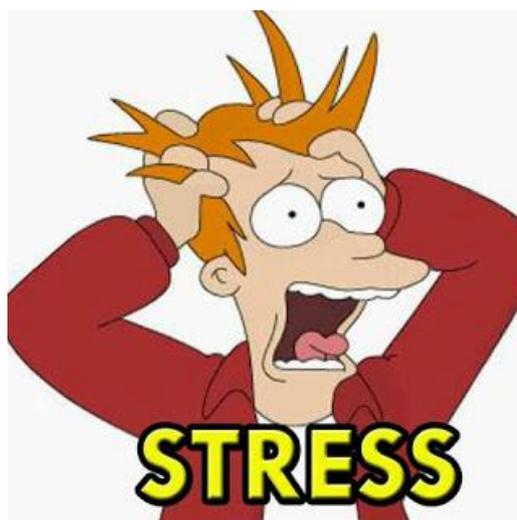
Small Group Meeting 2

Word Dwelling

Judges 6-8

Discussion Questions

1. Do you tend to be confident or to doubt yourself? How has that tendency influenced your decision-making?
2. Talk about a time when you saw someone paralyzed by the mistakes of the past. What opportunities did that person miss because of his or her guilt or shame?
3. Read Judges 6:11–16. What challenges or setbacks have you experienced that make you doubt if God is on your side or if you're capable of living the life he wishes for you?
4. What are some reasons it's so tempting for people to try to power up and accomplish things in their own strength rather than to trust in their heavenly Father?
5. In what ways does your past make it difficult for you to believe that God loves you deeply and unconditionally?
6. What is one thing you can do this week to begin to see you the way God sees you? What can this group do to encourage and support you?



Small Group Meeting 3

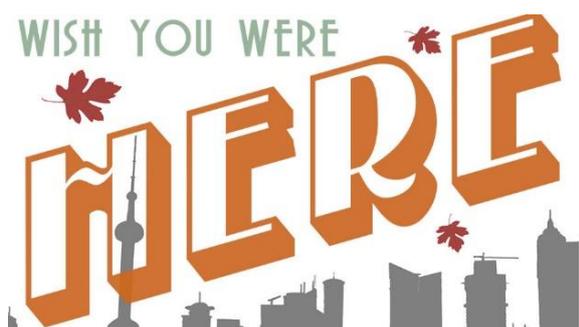
Control Yourself

To read before ...

When it comes to getting from where you are in life to where you want to be, this one thing can set you on the right course.

There are two kinds of wishes you can have about your life: those outside of your control and those under your control. When it comes to the wishes under your control, the only difference between you and the person you wish to be is the decisions you make. And those decisions are regulated by your self-control.

Self-control starts in the mind. It is key to getting where you wish you were. What are the thoughts that result in behaviours you're trying to avoid? What are the thoughts you need to take captive? Take time to think about it. Choose thoughts that result in behaviours you wish for your future.



Change Your Mind

(Memorize these verses this week)

The Lord is my light and my salvation— whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life— of whom shall I be afraid?

Psalm 37:1

Like a city whose walls are broken through is a person who lacks self-control.

Proverbs 25:28

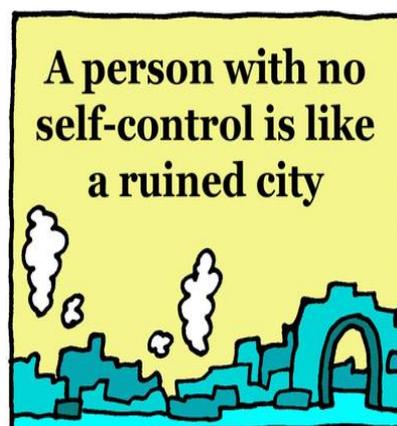
Small Group Meeting 3

Word Dwelling:

2 Cor 10:3-5

Discussion Questions

1. Are you a planner or are you more spontaneous? How do you benefit from that tendency? What does it cost you?
2. Do you think our culture values self-control? Explain.
3. Read Proverbs 25:28. Talk about a time when a lack of self-control caused you to lose progress in an area of your life.
4. Read 2 Corinthians 10:3–5. Is it difficult for you to believe that it's possible to “take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ”? Why or why not?
5. As you think about where you are versus where God wishes to take you in the future, what are some things that might be at stake? What might you or others lose or miss out on if you don't “take captive every thought”?
6. What is a thought you need to take captive? What is one thing you can do this week to begin to take that thought captive? What can this group do to support you?



Small Group Meeting 4

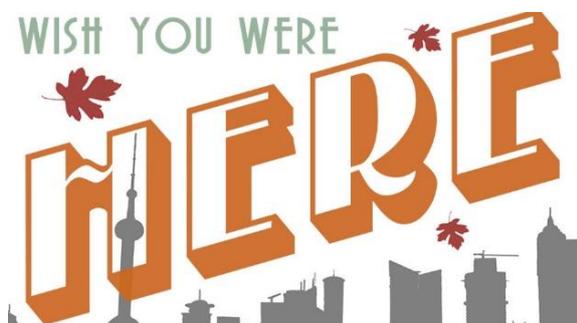
Somebody Knows

To read before ...

If there's a gap between where you are and where you wish you were, this week we look at a simple principle that can close that gap.

To get from where you are to where you wish you were . . . or even where God wishes you were, it always helps to know the way. And that means seeking the wisdom of people who travelled the path before you. Somebody knows how to get from where you are to where you want to be. Find that person. Listen up.

Don't listen to what you want to hear. Listen to people who are where you want to be and have nothing to lose by telling you the truth. They can help you get there. Somebody knows how to get from where you are to where you want to be. Find that person and listen up.



Change Your Mind

(Memorize this verse this week)

The prudent see danger and take refuge, but the simple keep going and pay the penalty.

Proverbs 22:3

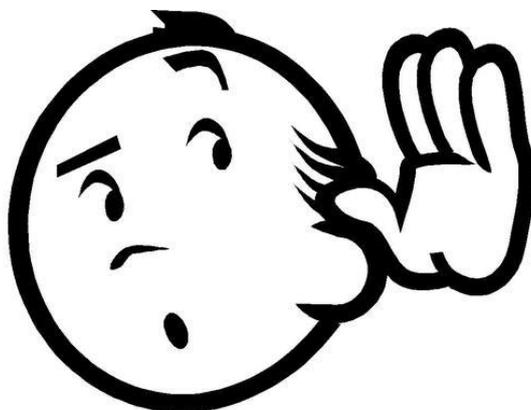
Small Group Meeting 4

Word Dwelling

Proverbs 22:3

Discussion Questions

1. Do you tend to be cautious or are you a risk-taker? How has that tendency been a strength in your life? How has it been a weakness?
2. Read Proverbs 22:3. When have you seen a friend or family member moving toward danger despite good advice from others? What, if anything, did you do?
3. During the message, we heard, "Give us enough time and we can always find someone who will tell us what we want to hear, which empowers us to do what we want to do and lands us where we don't want to be." Talk about a time in your life when you ignored wisdom and listened to people who told you what you wanted to hear. What did it cost you?
4. Who is one person in your life that has nothing to lose by telling you the truth? Do you currently seek wisdom from that person? Why or why not?
5. What do you wish you'd been doing all along to get where you want to be? What is one step you can take this week to begin doing it? What can this group do to support and encourage you?
6. What is a behaviour that has hindered you from getting where you want to be in life? What can you do this week to stop that behaviour? What can this group do to hold you accountable?



Small Group Meeting 5

A Wish for Each One of Us

To read before ...

How do you close the gap between where you are and where you want to be? Check out this wish that God has for everyone . . . including you.

In 2014, when the grand jury decision about the shooting of Michael Brown by a police officer was announced in Ferguson, Missouri, Benjamin Watson had just finished playing a game on Monday Night Football. He watched the riots on the news and processed what he was feeling. When he posted his thoughts on Facebook, he had no idea it would lead to calls from CNN, Fox News, and other media outlets. Eventually, his Facebook post was liked almost 900,000 times and shared by over 400,000 people. In this message, Benjamin talks about a wish that God has for all of us . . . for our local communities and beyond.

While sin divides, Jesus unites. Everyone is welcome in the Kingdom of God. Everyone is invited. Everyone gets in the same way. This inclusiveness and invitation unites us no matter our skin colour. Martin Luther King Jr. called this “the Beloved Community.” It is a picture of eternity.



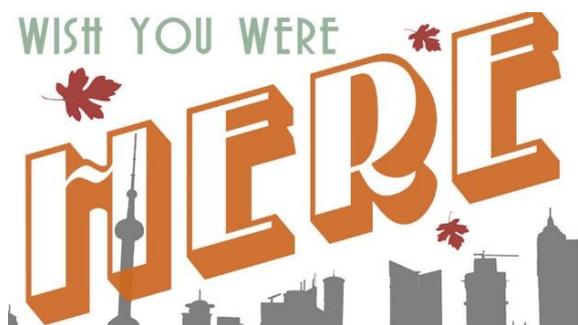
Small Group Meeting 5

Word Dwelling

Gal 3:26-28

Discussion Questions

1. Talk about a time when you faced a mess so big or so complex that you didn't know where to begin cleaning it up. What did you do?
2. Benjamin Watson described his emotional response to the grand jury decision in the Michael Brown shooting as angry, frustrated, fearful, embarrassed, sad, sympathetic, offended, confused, introspective, hopeless, hopeful, and encouraged. Which of those emotions did you experience? Do you think your emotional response was healthy or unhealthy? Explain.
3. In his Facebook post, Benjamin Watson wrote, "We don't have a skin problem, we have a sin problem." Do you agree? Why or why not?
4. Read Galatians 3:26–28. In what ways does this verse challenge some of our cultural assumptions about identity? How does it challenge you personally?
5. What are some ways sin divides your community? What would it look like for your community to be united in Christ?
6. What is one thing you can do, as a group, to promote unity in your community? What step can you take this week?

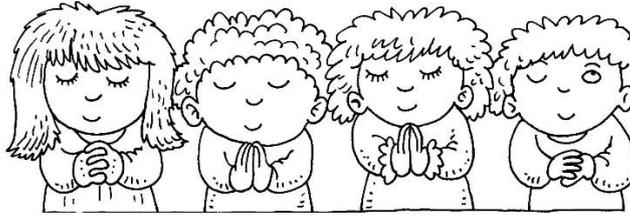


Change Your Mind

(Memorize this verse this week)

So, in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

Galatians 3:26–28



The Lord's Prayer (Modern)

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name.
Your Kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins,
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom,
the power and the glory are yours.
Now and forever.
Amen.

CENTRING PRAYER

- Become quiet and become aware of the presence of God.
- As you close your eyes, become aware that as you **breathe in**, you are receiving the Holy Spirit and as you **breathe out** you are being sent by the Spirit to do the work that the Spirit calls you to do. (*Do this for any length of time that feels comfortable*).
- Now focus on an incident in the Bible (such as the crucifixion, the resurrection, one of Jesus' miracles, etc.) – allow it to fill your thought process. This is “centring”.
- Turn your hands so that your palms face upwards. Thank God for all that you have received from the hand of God.

- Turn your hands so that your palms face downwards. Give God all your cares and concerns

MY Commitments as a member of this Small Group

- 1. I shall show unconditional love to all people.**
I will continue to learn how to love every member of this group. Although I may not always agree with the opinions of others or with their behaviour, I shall continue to love those with whom I may disagree. I will reach out to those who are not part of a small group and I will invite them to be a part of this group and, when they come, I shall make them feel a part of this group.
- 2. I will pray for others.**
I will pray for each member of the group. I believe that my prayers, in the name of Jesus, are always heard and that each member will experience God's blessing.
- 3. I shall be honest and sensitive.**
I shall be honest with everyone, even though this may lead to a discussion of some delicate and potentially hurtful subjects. I shall speak the truth in love (*Eph 4:15*), aware of the fact that God sometimes uses us to help others. I shall be orientated to see the needs of others with the eyes of Christ, to listen with Christ's ears and to love with Christ's heart.
- 4. I shall live under the direction of the Holy Spirit.**
I put myself under the direction of the Holy Spirit and give myself to the service and blessing of the group, the congregation and others.
- 5. I commit myself to the Small Group as a lifestyle.**
I commit myself to attend Small Group regularly.
- 6. I commit myself to give my offering freely and generously.**
I undertake to give my tithes and offering faithfully every month, because I want to serve God and God's kingdom



In this series of 5 entitled
WISH YOU WERE HERE

1. From Here to There
2. Seeing is Believing
3. Control Yourself
4. Somebody Knows
5. A Wish for Each One of Us



“Wish you were here”, a series by Andy Stanley, was re-worked for this series.

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