

# STUDY GUIDE



# beWell!

MENTAL WELLNESS INITIATIVE

Achieving Mental Wellness through  
Grace, Bonding, Boundaries and Discernment

# **Session 1**

## **Grace and Truth**

## **Session 1: Grace and Truth**

### **OPEN**

No one is perfect. We all experience different kinds of brokenness, some worse than others. But the question facing us all is how do we get better? In this five-part video series, Dr. Henry Cloud, New York Times bestselling author of *Changes That Heal*, sets out to answer that question by providing key takeaways from his experience as a counselor and leader that will help you begin the journey toward healing.

In session one Dr. Cloud introduces the three main ingredients God consistently uses to bring about personal growth.

### **VIEW**

Watch Session One: Grace and Truth (11 Minutes)

### **REVIEW**

Part of being human is feeling broken. Whether that brokenness comes in the form of mental health issues, relationship problems, or workplace difficulties, we all find ourselves asking “How do I get better?” from time to time. What does brokenness look like for you today? Where in your life are you asking, “How do I get better?”

When you find yourself facing brokenness, where have you tended to turn for answers?

While there are a variety of ways we can pursue growth, Dr. Cloud pointed out three essential principles that must be present: God’s truth, God’s grace, and time. Based on what you learned in this session, which of these principles is most often absent in your pursuit of growth? Why?

Incorporating God’s truth into your growth requires more than rote memory. It’s a process of digging below the surface and applying that truth to your brokenness. In what ways do you rely on God’s truth for your personal growth?

Oftentimes, we begin to identify our brokenness by noticing its symptoms rather than addressing the actual cause. Are you focused on your symptoms or the cause? What would it look like for you to dig deeper to reach the roots of your brokenness?

The second principle Dr. Cloud emphasized is that of God's grace, and he defined it in the following way, "Grace is unmerited favor." In other words, grace is not something we can earn or produce. As you think about the areas where you'd like to grow, how much of your inability to do so is rooted in a reliance on yourself? What are some practical ways you could invite trustworthy people into your life for help and encouragement?

How could you be an encouragement to someone else who may be in need?

Last but not least, Dr. Cloud pointed out that growth of any kind requires time. The goal of walking with Christ is to bear fruit, which only happens over time. Are you looking for a quick fix to whatever problem(s) you're facing? What would have to change for you to adopt a more long-term approach to growth?

How could you practically begin to discipline yourself in patience today?

## **APPLY WHAT YOU'VE LEARNED**

Select an activity from the list below to begin applying the lessons of this session to your life.

**List:** Write down 2–3 measurable ways you would like to grow on a piece of paper and set it somewhere you will see every day. Each morning as you get going, pray and ask that God would help you to experience healing in these areas.

**Encourage:** Based on the material you learned in this session, reach out to someone you know who is struggling and encourage them in their journey toward healing.

**Pray:** If you're lacking in patience, ask God to give you the grace to wait on his timing to bring about the healing you desire.

# Notes



# **Session 2**

## **Bonding to Others**



## **Session 2: Bonding to Others**

### **OPEN**

All of us were created with needs. One of them is relationships. No matter how effective we are at accomplishing tasks on our own, we cannot satisfy our need for relationships without inviting others into our lives. Many times, that threatens our comfort in challenging ways because it requires a willingness on our part to be vulnerable. But God calls us to this kind of connection as it is where healing begins.

### **VIEW**

Watch Session Two: Bonding to Others (11 Minutes)

### **REVIEW**

Dr. Cloud began this session by emphasizing Christ's incarnation. When it came to our sin, God did not simply remain at a distance while providing a solution. He entered into our pain, assuming body and flesh, engaging in real relationships in order to reconcile us to God. How should this truth change the way you think about how you pursue healing? In what ways do you need to prioritize the importance of relationships in your life?

Much like our hearts that require an inflow of blood as well as an outflow, we all need relational input just as much as we do output. Neither can replace the other. No level of external work can substitute for the input we receive by being vulnerable with others. Do you consider yourself vulnerable with those around you? Who are some of the people who know the "real" you? How do you experience input from them?

Think about a time when you felt emotionally disconnected. It could be a time from your past or it could be something you're experiencing right now. How did that disconnect affect your daily life? In what ways did it influence your ability to trust others?

Now think about a time when you felt emotionally connected. How did your experience differ from what you described in the previous question? What did you do to stay emotionally connected?

As you think back on your time feeling emotionally disconnected, what would you have wanted in terms of input from others that would have made you feel differently?

Based on that experience, how should it inform the way you try to be a healthy source of input for someone else?

Whether or not you are searching for healing, it's very possible God may be calling you to be the kind of positive relationship someone needs in their life. Who do you know facing a struggle who could use encouragement? What are some practical ways you could be that encouragement to them this week?

## **APPLY WHAT YOU'VE LEARNED**

Select an activity from the list below to begin applying the lessons of this session to your life.

**Invite:** Identify at least one mature Christian in your life and schedule time to meet with them. During your conversation, practice vulnerability by sharing where you are struggling and inviting them in to help you carry that burden as you pursue healing.

**Journal:** Spend fifteen minutes writing about a time when you felt emotionally disconnected and reflect on how God provided for you during that time. Thank him for his provision.

**Assist:** If you know someone who feels emotionally disconnected, reach out to them and practice being a healthy input in their life.

# Notes



# **Session 3**

## **Separating from Others**

## **Session 3: Separating from Others**

### **OPEN**

Much of life happens outside of our control. The earth continues to spin on its axis, the sun rises and sets, and gravity keeps us rooted to the soil under our feet. But we do have choices to make about the ways in which we spend our time and energy as well as whom we allow to cash in on them. To navigate these choices well, we must learn to set up boundaries not only with the people around us, but for ourselves as well.

### **VIEW**

Watch Session Three: Separating from Others (11 Minutes)

### **REVIEW**

In the first few moments of the session, Dr. Cloud shared the story of a concerned father who visited him looking for help dealing with his son. Whom can you identify with in the story? What about their example hits home with you?

Do you consider yourself as having healthy boundaries in your life? Why or why not?

Where do you have the greatest opportunity for growth in terms of boundaries?

Dr. Cloud talked about two different kinds of boundaries: interpersonal and personal. The former has to do with boundaries we put in place to keep others from manipulating us and to ensure we are not enabling bad behavior in them. Whom have you had to institute boundaries with? What effect has that had practically speaking?

Perhaps up to this point you've never set boundaries with anyone in your life. Whom do you need to institute boundaries with? In what ways does the lack of boundaries affect you right now?

Setting a boundary begins by speaking the truth in love. Whom do you need to speak truth in love to? What truth do they need to hear?

Matthew 18:15–17 is considered the Christian blueprint for confronting sin with other Christians, but it's also a helpful process for wading through conflict with those who do not share our faith. Practically speaking, how could you use this passage to deal with a difficult relationship in a healthy manner? Who could you invite to join you in this process if it escalates to the point of needing community?

In addition to the interpersonal aspect of setting boundaries, there's also a personal aspect. We all make decisions about how we use our time and energy on a daily basis, but it's not always spent in the healthiest ways. Think back over your last few days. Where do you devote the majority of your time and energy? When you have free time, how do you spend it?

What are some ways you'd like to grow in self-discipline when it comes to your time and energy? How would you like to use them differently?

What difference would it make in your life if you were to do so?



## **APPLY WHAT YOU'VE LEARNED**

Select an activity from the list below to begin applying the lessons of this session to your life.

**Replace:** As you analyze how you spend your time, choose one activity that is a poor use of your time and give it up for the next week. Replace it with a beneficial activity and note the difference in your quality of life.

**Confront:** If you identified someone you need to speak truth in love to as a result of this session, find time to do so over the course of this next week. Confront them graciously concerning the lack of boundaries in your relationship and plan for how you intend to move forward with better boundaries in place.

**Encourage:** If you know someone who struggles with setting boundaries in relationships with others, make time to talk with them about the material you learned in this session. Encourage them in practical ways to take ownership over those relationships.

# Notes



# **Session 4**

## **Sorting Out Good and Bad**

## **Session 4: Sorting Out Good and Bad**

### **OPEN**

So far we've looked at the importance of relationships and boundaries as we begin the journey toward healing. They each play an integral role in the healing process, but there's one more aspect we also need to consider. This journey starts by recognizing that we are not who we should be. We recognize a deficiency of sorts, and oftentimes that brings with it guilt and shame. In this session, we're going to learn how to navigate those feelings in the process of pursuing a brighter future.

### **VIEW**

Watch Session Four: Sorting Out Good and Bad (10 Minutes)

### **REVIEW**

When God created the world, it was perfect. The world we know today has been tainted by sin. But we never lost the idea of God's design, which is why we know we—along with the world—are not what we ought to be. What are some ways that you see the world around you tainted by sin? What effect does it have on your daily life?

Dr. Cloud defined sin as “missing the mark.” When you consider your life, in what ways are you missing the mark? What would a perfect “you” would look like?

Recognizing the gap between who we are and who we should be often leads to judgment. We judge ourselves for not measuring up. What are some of the ways you judge yourself? How does that judgment influence your home life? What about your work?

How does it influence your relationships? Is there anyone you judge for not treating you the way they should?

Naturally, we all try to deal with these feelings in one way or another, but only the gospel provides the solution we long for. How have you tried to deal with your judgment toward yourself and others?

Admitting our imperfections always brings about feelings of guilt and shame without a safe place to talk about them. Do you have a safe community to share your shortcomings like the kind Dr. Cloud described in the session? Why or why not?

If you lack a safe community, what steps can you take this week to begin looking for one?

As Dr. Cloud emphasized, there is no condemnation for those who believe in Jesus Christ. His grace invites us into the freedom of new life. And that starts with forgiveness. Based on the truth of God's love for you in Christ, where do you need to extend forgiveness to yourself today?

Who do you need to extend forgiveness to?

Practically speaking, how will you combine forgiveness with a safe community to process your brokenness moving forward?

## **APPLY WHAT YOU'VE LEARNED**

Select an activity from the list below to begin applying the lessons of this session to your life.

**Surrender:** If you're holding judgment against someone in your life, make an effort to surrender that to the Lord. Ask him to help you walk in forgiveness instead.

**Pray:** Each morning this week, start your days by asking God to give you a gracious perspective of yourself. Instead of judging every perceived misstep, ask him to help you celebrate that he delights over you through your faith in Christ.

**Seek Out:** If you're lacking a safe community, seek one out in the coming days. Whether it's a recovery group through your church, a formal counseling setting, or an accountability group with trusted friends, work at joining a community where you can share your struggles and pursue healing.

# Notes





# **Session 5**

## **Becoming an Adult**

## **Session 5: Becoming an Adult**

### **OPEN**

No one grows outgrows their insecurities if they're left unchecked. Many of us feel like imposters in our own skin. As we look at those around us, everyone else seems to have their lives put together while we're just struggling to make it through the day. The good news is that there's hope. In this final session, we're going to talk through what it means to become an adult and how to confidently embrace what you have to offer the world.

### **VIEW**

Watch Session Five: Becoming an Adult (9 minutes)

### **REVIEW**

Let's begin with the basics by talking about adulthood. It's obviously something we're all growing into, but we don't always recognize our unconscious assumptions about what we believe it to be. What would you describe as the essential qualities of a mature adult?

How did your parents model these qualities for you? What about your teachers? Bosses?

One of the easiest indicators of insecurity is an inability to disagree with those around you. Do you find that to be a common response in your interactions with others, especially those you look up to? What are you afraid will result if you express your own opinions?

How do you tend to react toward the possibility of failure?

As Dr. Cloud said in the session, the only way to self-confidence is competence. Where do you feel incompetent today? What steps can you take toward competence in those areas moving forward?

What are some of the unique talents God has given you? What passions has he placed within you?

Take a moment to read Romans 12:1–2. How do these verses tell us that we can discern God's will? What are some practical ways you can live this out in the next few weeks?

Becoming your own person means embracing failure. It's never a perfect journey. There are always speed bumps along the way. Since they're unavoidable, the best course of action is to expect them and learn to overcome them. Based on the insecurities you've identified about yourself in this session, what can you do to pursue healing? Where can you risk failure? Or voice your opinions with grace?

## **APPLY WHAT YOU'VE LEARNED**

Select an activity from the list below to begin applying the lessons of this session to your life.

**Lead:** As you think about what it means to be a mature adult, model that for those who look up to you. Live in such a way as to instruct those around you in what adulthood looks like.

**Embrace:** This week, use your unique gifts in ways that serve others, even if it causes you to stand out a little bit. Don't be afraid of being seen by others. Instead, confront your fear of failure and lean into the gifts God has given to you.

**Speak:** In a conversation this week, disagree with someone. Do so graciously, but be willing to speak your mind and own your opinions.

# Notes





[newsongchurch.com](http://newsongchurch.com)