



LIFE'S HEALING CHOICES DISCUSSION GUIDE

The Reality Choice

Matthew 5:3

"I don't understand what I do. For what I want to do I don't do, but what I hate to do, I do! ...I know that nothing good lives in my sinful nature. I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out."

Romans 7:15,18b (NIV)

In life it seems that once we solve one problem another one pops up. The same is true for our temptations and sins. They just keep popping up. Even if we have been a follower of Christ for a long time, when we think we have an issue settled Satan attacks us in another area. Self-help books and tapes tell us how to solve problems faster. God's Word tells us how to cut off the power source of the problems. We all have a sin nature. Even the Apostle Paul acknowledged the struggle, as we see in the verse at the top. All of us can relate to what Paul wrote. The list below gives some of the problem areas that keep popping up in peoples' lives. Take a moment to circle the areas that are in your life now. Keep these in mind as you work through the study and how you can address these problems based on your discussions with the group.

<i>Pride</i>	<i>Uncontrolled tongue</i>	<i>Finances</i>
<i>Stress</i>	<i>Body Image</i>	<i>Materialism</i>
<i>Fears</i>	<i>Worry</i>	<i>Unhealthy Relationships</i>
<i>Overworking</i>	<i>Bad habits</i>	<i>Painful memories</i>
<i>Unhealthy Attractions</i>	<i>Anger</i>	<i>Perfectionism</i>
<i>Addiction</i>	<i>Dishonesty</i>	<i>Resentment</i>
<i>Regrets</i>	<i>Need to control</i>	<i>Compulsive thoughts</i>
<i>Lust/Sexual Issues</i>	<i>Lack of Self-Control</i>	<i>Food Disorder</i>
<i>Trust Issues</i>	<i>Co-Dependency</i>	<i>Gender Confusion</i>

This series will spend the next six weeks looking at the Beatitudes, Jesus' solutions for the problems that affect our lives. This week, we will look at the problem of us wanting to play God, and the choices we need to make to face the reality that we are not God.

1. POOR IN SPIRIT

What does God give to those who are poor in spirit according to Matthew 5:3?

- To be blessed is to receive real happiness, bliss and divine reward from God. Why is it important for believers to seek God's blessing?
- Poor in spirit is defined as "spiritually helpless." How does the following statement speak to this truth about our spiritual condition?

I admit I need help, that I'm powerless to control my tendency to do the wrong things and that my life is unmanageable.

Proverbs 29:23 says "A man's pride brings him low, but a man of lowly spirit gains honor." We all try to play God by attempting to control our image, other people, our problems, and our pain. Why do you feel the need to be in control? What are some ways you try to control your image, your problems, your pain, or other people?

2. HUMBLY ADMIT I NEED HELP.

Read Proverbs 28:13. What does this verse say about people who try to hide their sins and about those that confess them?

- I'm broken: How can we recognize that in a broken world that I can be broken too?
- My secrets make me sick: When you hide a hurt, sin, or fear, why would the Bible state you will never succeed?
- I must admit it to defeat it: What burdens are removed when you admit your sin?
- My pride and my fear keep me stuck: Describe how people never progress because of their need to be in control. What ultimately do they need to do to fix their pain?

3. HUMBLY ASK GOD FOR HELP.

What is good about a person's powerlessness in 2 Corinthians 1:9?

- What are our usual reactions when we are faced with a difficult situation we don't have the resources to deal with?
- What do you think Paul means that powerlessness was "good"?

Read Matthew 5:3 and observe when there is more of God's rule.

- When does a person experience blessing according to this verse?
- Why does the verse indicate less is more when it comes to God's rule?

God is the God of resurrection, and he can raise a marriage up from the dead. He can do the same for a career, or your relationship with your kids. What is it in your life that you are powerless to change? What is keeping you from humbly asking God for help in the out of control areas of your life?

4. HUMBLY ACCEPT HELP FROM OTHERS.

After you read Ecclesiastes 4:9-10, discuss why it says two are better than one.

- In what ways does God show us that working together is important?
- What gets in the way of people getting along and working together?

What are the steps to healing listed in James 5:16?

- God could heal us if he wanted to. Why do you think he makes us so that we need each other?
- What is the benefit of confessing to one another for healing?

Assignment:

How bad does it have to get before you get help? Are you ready to admit you need help, ask God for help, and accept help from others? Jesus died on the cross to provide what we can't, the grace to be able to change. Spend some time reading God's Word to help you face your problems this week. Then choose at least one person whom you trust to share your hurts, habits, and hang-ups. Healing can begin when you share your feelings with another person.