

SESSION 1

Finding Wholehearted Life In Jesus ►

FINDING WHOLEHEARTED LIFE IN JESUS

READ

Blessed are those who keep his testimonies, who seek him with their whole heart. ◀ Psalm 119:2

□ Psalm 86:11-12

□ Acts 2:42-47

Welcome to *Finding Wholehearted Life Together*. We know it can be intimidating starting something new, especially if you are entering a new environment with people you may not know well. We believe you are here for a reason. God has placed you in this time and place so you may know Him more fully, know yourself more completely, and know others more deeply. Whether this is your first time to participate in a group or your hundredth time, our desire is for you to grow closer to God and others as you seek wholehearted life in Jesus.

When God calls us into a relationship with Himself, He also calls us into fellowship with His people.

The book you hold in your hands was designed to introduce truths and to deepen your understanding of what following Jesus means and looks like in your everyday life. This curriculum was created not just for information, but for transformation. When we bring our whole heart to Jesus (our thoughts, emotions, desires, and choices), He transforms all of who we are, and we find wholehearted life in Him.

Our study together will help you grow in your personal walk with God and in fellowship with others. We read in **Acts 2:42-47** that God forged a community of people who knew and followed him. They gathered together corporately in the temple and privately in smaller home groups. This is the church, and we are a part of God's community. Apart from joining in fellowship with God's people, we cannot know God fully. A crucial part of growing as a disciple of Jesus is following Him with others. When we journey with God's people, we witness how the Word of God transforms lives by the Spirit of God. When God calls us into a relationship with Himself, He also calls us into fellowship with His people. This is why we call our small groups, "Fellowship Groups."

So no matter where you find yourself on the journey, we are hopeful for what God will do in you, in your Fellowship Group, and in our church family as we seek to follow God wholeheartedly.

In the curriculum, daily rhythms will help you walk with God and with those in your group. Each day you will engage in a few simple elements to guide you in connecting with God. This will also prepare you to participate in discussions and grow together as a group.

READ: Scripture passages and a brief devotional

REFLECT: Questions to guide your personal application

RESPOND: Prayer points to encourage your response to God

At the end of each week on the Summary page, this image communicates the “heartbeat” of that session in one clear statement.



As we begin this study together, take some time to reflect on the following question and to respond using the prayer below.

REFLECT

What do you hope God will do in you and in your group this semester?

RESPOND

Father, You promise that when I draw near to You, You also draw near to me (**James 4:8**). Spirit, You alone can change my heart. Guide me as I begin the journey of finding wholehearted life in Jesus with my group.

TAKING TIME TO READ GOD'S WORD

READ

For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return there but water the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and the bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth, it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it. ◀ Isaiah 55:10-11

- ☐ Hebrews 4:12
- ☐ 2 Timothy 3:16-17

The Scriptures in all 66 books of the Bible are verbally inspired of God, error free in the original manuscripts, and the supreme authority of faith and practice for followers of Jesus. The Word of God is living and active and is able to discern the very thoughts and intentions of our heart (Hebrews 4:12). Paul instructs Timothy that Scripture is meant for teaching, correcting, and training us to be mature and equipped (2 Timothy 3:16-17). So, reading the Bible is of utmost importance for all of us in our journey of faith.

*God's Word always
accomplishes His work.*

Each daily devotional begins with **READ**. This section shares a focal Scripture and offers additional passages for further reading in God's Word. The devotional is based on that day's passage to help you *learn*, *love*, and *live* God's Word in your journey as you discover wholehearted life in Jesus.

REFLECT

What thoughts come to mind from today's verses and devotional?

How do you view the Bible?

How might your life be impacted if you spent time with God in His Word every day?

RESPOND

- Jesus, lead me so that Your Word accomplishes Your work in my life.
- God, help me to trust the words You have breathed out in the Scriptures.
- Spirit, help me spend time in God's Word daily this week.

TAKING TIME TO REFLECT

READ

Give me understanding, that I may keep your law and observe it with my whole heart. ◀ Psalm 119:34

- ☐ Psalm 1
- ☐ Colossians 3:2

Psalm 1 teaches that the person who meditates on God’s Word is “blessed.” Taking time to reflect on God’s Word and writing your thoughts down are important ways to engage God’s Word with your whole heart.

They say Einstein’s genius was that he could hold an idea in his mind for days and continually look at it from a hundred different angles. However, most of us struggle to keep two or three thoughts at the same time. Writing out your thoughts helps you hold them in your mind so you can focus on them. Sometimes you may not even know what you are thinking until you write it down.

That’s what the **REFLECT** portion of each devotional is for—reflecting on what’s happening in your heart. This is a time to set your mind on things above (Colossians 3:2). Make the best use of this time by using the space provided to record your thoughts, feelings, desires, and choices.

REFLECT

What thoughts come to mind from today's verses and devotional?

Do you find it difficult in your life to meditate or reflect? Why or why not?

How do you think reflecting will help you as you engage God through His Word?

RESPOND

- Father, help me to know the blessing of meditating on Your words.
- Jesus, open the eyes of my heart to see how You are working inside me.
- Spirit, as I meditate on Your Word, would You guide me and speak to me through it?

TAKING TIME TO RESPOND AND TALK WITH GOD

READ

O LORD, *you have searched me and known me!* ◀ Psalm 139:1

- ☐ Psalm 139:1-18
- ☐ Philippians 4:6-7

In **Psalm 139**, David shows a pathway to deeper intimacy with God. The Creator of all things, motivated by love, created us. He holds all things together. He knows all things and desires for us to know Him. When we understand that God is good and that He is for us, we can entrust our hearts and our very lives to Him. We can open up to Him freely and honestly without fear.

RESPOND is an intentional part of each devotional, giving you an opportunity to communicate with God. We provide a few prayer points to help you start the conversation with

God each day, or you can simply pray these statements as a prayer. We trust the Holy Spirit to guide you and to help you commune with Him further.

*Prayer is the
opportunity to step
into communication
with God.*

REFLECT

What thoughts come to mind from today's verses and devotional?

How have you viewed prayer up to this point in your life?

Are you able to be honest and open with God?

RESPOND

- Father, thank You for knowing me so well.
- Jesus, help me know You and to make You known to others.
- Spirit, thank You that Your peace guards my heart and mind.

WHOLEHEARTED ACTIVITY

COMMITTING TO FELLOWSHIP

As part of our weekly devotional rhythm, there will be an **ACTIVITY** to help you in your journey toward wholehearted life in Jesus. Our desire is for you to experience transformation and not just learn information. Your first activity prepares you to commit to your Fellowship Group for this semester. If you are new to Fellowship Groups, we launch each group with clear and written expectations for its members. We believe commitment is essential to a healthy group.

READ

And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near. ◀ Hebrews 10:24-25

A Group Commitment is one of the keys to a great Fellowship Group, so take time to consider this and come prepared to make a personal commitment to others. It will vastly improve your group's dynamics and your personal experience.

Why does commitment matter? Because healthy fellowship takes commitment. The Bible encourages us to gather together and to “stir one another to good works,” but also it warns us not to neglect meeting together ([Hebrews 10:24-25](#)).

As a group, you are committing to four essentials of a healthy Fellowship Group: *Purpose, Presence, Participation, and Protection*. While some groups last for three or more years, we ask group members to make no more than a one-year commitment at a time.

You are also committing to one another and will express this by signing a Group Commitment form during your next gathering. Your signature is a way of communicating to other group members, “You can count on me!”

REFLECT

Review the Group Commitment on the following page. Why do you think commitment is so important to a Fellowship Group?

What's the difference between learning information and seeking transformation?

How will you personally honor the four essentials of a healthy group?

RESPOND

- God, thank You for the opportunity to be a part of this Fellowship Group.
- Jesus, help me support and pray for the people in my group.
- Spirit, help us encourage one another as a group.

FELLOWSHIP GROUP COMMITMENT

ESSENTIALS OF A HEALTHY FELLOWSHIP GROUP

Purpose: I recognize this group is purposed for life transformation, not just for information. To the best of my ability and understanding, I will support the purpose of this group, which is **to help people find wholehearted life in Jesus.**

Presence: I will attend group meetings and make them a priority in my personal, family, and work schedules. I understand that when I'm absent, the group is not fully present. I will strive to be on time. In the rare event that I will miss group, I will communicate with my leader and host beforehand.

Participation: I understand that I will get more out of our group meetings if I have read and interacted with the material. I will read and engage the Scripture and devotionals throughout the week so that I am prepared to participate with the group, sharing from my personal experiences.

Protection: I agree that what happens in our group stays in our group. I will protect the privacy and confidentiality of what my group shares and learns about one another.

Directions: Please print your name in the first blank and then complete the Fellowship Group Details in the spaces provided below. Be sure to sign the Group Commitment form.

I/we _____
commit to the four essentials of a healthy Fellowship Group:
Purpose, Presence, Participation, and Protection.

Fellowship Group Details:

Leader's Name: _____

Leader's Email: _____

Leader's Phone: _____

Season of Group Commitment: This season of commitment is from

_____ to _____

(minimum is 10 weeks; maximum is 1 year)

Group Schedule this Season: We meet weekly with scheduled breaks.

Day of the Week: _____ Start Time: _____ End Time: _____



Groups

SESSION 1 ► SUMMARY



Fellowship Groups exist to help people find wholehearted life in Jesus.

- *Finding Wholehearted Life Together* is about transformation, not just information.
- Reading God's Word is one of the primary ways God speaks to us and works inside us.
- Taking time to reflect on what God is saying to you and doing in you is fundamental to engaging Him with your whole heart.
- Prayer is our opportunity to respond and to communicate with God.
- Healthy fellowship takes commitment.

NOTES

SESSION 1 ► GROUP GATHERING

GROUP LIFE

GATHER

To set the tone for your group time, make sure to set aside at least an hour for group discussion.

REVIEW

Take time as a group to reflect on what God is doing in your midst through the weekly readings and devotionals.

- Begin by reading God's Word together. Ask a few people to read a verse or verses from this week's session that caught their attention or stirred something new in their hearts.
- Have someone read aloud the Session Summary.

DISCUSS

1. What's the difference between seeking transformation versus learning information as a group?
2. Who or what has influenced your view of God's Word?
3. How would you rate your personal habit of spending time in God's Word?
How will being in this group with others help you with that?
4. How would you evaluate your personal time in prayer? How do you think this group and curriculum will help your prayer life?

5. Why do you think commitment is an important part of a healthy group?

6. How will you respond to the Fellowship Group Commitment?

Group Commitment

Take a few minutes as a group to read the Group Commitment. Make sure every group member has the details to complete the “Fellowship Group Details” and confirm your season of commitment. Sign the group commitment document.

- Group Signatures: Pass around the commitment for signatures
- Prayer: Take time to pray over your group commitment

PREPARE

The greatest commandment is to love God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength, and to love others as yourself ([Matthew 22:36-40](#)). God intended for humans to be whole beings with whole hearts, and the heart is what matters most to Him. Join us next week as we take a deeper look at God’s original design for wholeness.

PRAY

- Close out your time together praying specifically for expressed needs of the group.
- Pray that the Spirit will enlighten hearts and minds as we study next week’s content.