

AN INTERACTIVE  
BIBLE STUDY

Includes Six-Session  
Video Series

COME

*Letting Go of What's Keeping*

BACK

*You from Soul Revival*

TO

LISA WHITTLE

GOD



estherpress

Books for Courageous Women  
from David C Cook

# Ways to Study *Come Back to God*



**Access the Videos Here**  
Link: <https://DavidCCook.org/access>  
Access Code: ComeBack  
Or scan this QR code:

A square QR code with a central logo consisting of the letters 'ep' and a vertical line with a small crossbar, resembling a stylized 'e' or a logo.

*Session 1*

# REVIVAL

YOU ARE MY PLACE OF REFUGE. YOU  
ARE ALL I REALLY WANT IN LIFE.

Psalm 142:5b

Memorize this verse this week by our repetition model.

To follow along in the *I Want God*  
book, read chapters 1, 2, and 12.

DAY 1

# Video and Outline

Stream the “Revival” (session 1) video and complete the session 1 outline as you watch.

- ✦ Revivals are incredible \_\_\_\_\_.
- ✦ Revivals start inside the soul of someone who is coming to God for the first time or coming back to God with a \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ heart.
- ✦ Revival isn’t just about a corporate gathering. It’s about what God does to bring you \_\_\_\_\_.
- ✦ Desperation is often the exact \_\_\_\_\_ to be in to bring on needed revival.
- ✦ Cycle of longing:
  1. We have a \_\_\_\_\_ for something.
  2. We \_\_\_\_\_ on the longing.

3. We \_\_\_\_\_ often temporary results that satisfy the longing.

4. We still long and either change our \_\_\_\_\_ to something else ... or change our \_\_\_\_\_ of getting the same longing in our \_\_\_\_\_.

✦ Jesus Himself asked the very question “ \_\_\_\_\_ ” in John 1—a question that went straight to longing.

✦ The word that is repeated three times in this passage (Matt. 22:37), *ALL*, tells us what kind of heart God wants. It’s also the kind of life God wants from us and for us: \_\_\_\_\_.

✦ If we don’t want God the most, if He’s not our primary longing, then today can start a new positioning: a heart that is \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ for revival.

✦ The benefit of knowing what you want: the complications of daily life decisions become \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

✦ A good way to know if something has become an idol in your life is to ask yourself these questions:

1. Do I try hard to \_\_\_\_\_ and will I think of creative ways to keep it?

2. Do I \_\_\_\_\_ about the hold it has on me?

3. Do I \_\_\_\_\_ ?

✦ God may want to do something \_\_\_\_\_, but first He wants to do something \_\_\_\_\_.

DAY 2

# What Is My Real Issue?

Lack	
Plenty	
Spiritually Dead	
Searching	

**We can't move forward until we name where we are.** Then revival is possible.

What does it mean to you to be revived?

Now look up the definition of *revival*.

Where do you want to go? Write down what you would like your spiritual life with the Lord to look like.

**Read Matthew 22:34–46.**

What question did the Pharisees ask?

What was Jesus' reply in verse 37?

What two words are repeated together in that verse?

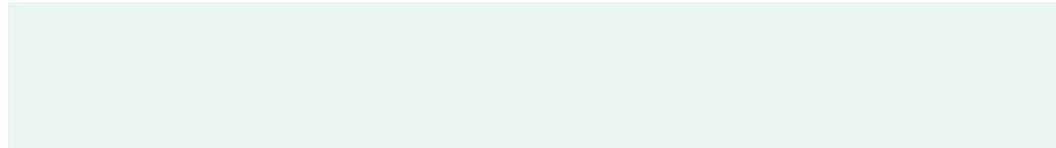
What does that say to you about the importance of the all-in heart?

Practically speaking, what does loving the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind look like on a Tuesday afternoon? When you are in a carpool line or at Target?

What does Jeremiah 29:13 say is the result when you seek the Lord with your whole heart?

What does that suggest to you about the possibilities of revival (or being revived) when we

come with an all-in heart?



Write out your personal revival resets to add to this list or a prayer for personal revival as we go into day 3.

### REVIVAL RESETS

I'm Tired of ...	I Want to ...
fighting for people to love me.	fight for people to love God.
this chase for approval.	be revived to pursue only an audience of One.
watching other people serve God.	partner with God for the kingdom rather than sit on the sidelines!
being halfway in with God.	get off the spiritual roller coaster and make progress.
making decisions based on my fear of the unknown and my desire for comfort.	be free from the chains that have kept me bound.
trying to control everything.	finally know and rest in God's ability to take care of it all.

I'm Tired of ...	I Want to ...

DAY 3

# What Do I Want?

WHAT DO I WANT?

33

Look up and write down Matthew 6:33.

What are we supposed to seek first?

Why do you think Jesus did *not* ask the question “What do you *need*?”

Look up Psalm 37:4. What does the first part of this verse say is the key to the last part (about desire)?

Write out a practical example of what a “now” (temporal) focused life could look like:

Look up Galatians 5:13.

What has God called us to live in?

How are we supposed to serve one another?

Why is serving people with the wrong motive of people-pleasing not doing it in the true freedom of service God has called us to?

On a scale of 1 to 10, how often do you consider the needs of others?



On a scale of 1 to 10, how often do you consider your own needs?



What do you think dying to self means according to Luke 9:23?

Have you ever thought dying to self means denying desire? Why or why not?

How has cutting off a created part of yourself—these components of desire—caused you to

lose spiritual connection, if it has?

Describe what you understand this “crash and burn” to be. Have you ever had a time when you expressed your desires negatively or suppressed your desires because you thought they were wrong (and had the wrong idea about them at their core)? Write about that and the ramifications.

Defining Want vs. Need
<p><i>Need.</i> First define it in your own words.</p>
<p>Then look it up in a dictionary online and write down the definition.</p>
<p><i>Want.</i> First define it in your own words.</p>
<p>Then look it up in a dictionary online and write down the definition.</p>

List three things you know you need to do right now on a small to a large scale—can be either!  
(For example: I need to get healthy, I need to clean my house, I need to mend a relationship with a friend, etc.)

1. I need to \_\_\_\_\_.

2. I need to \_\_\_\_\_.

3. I need to \_\_\_\_\_.

Now complete each sentence by noting why you honestly don't do those things.

1. But I don't want to \_\_\_\_\_.

2. But I don't want to \_\_\_\_\_.

3. But I don't want to \_\_\_\_\_.

**Reread John 1:35–38.**

Now imagine Jesus turning to you and asking, “What do you want?” How would you answer

that? (Be honest. He already knows.)

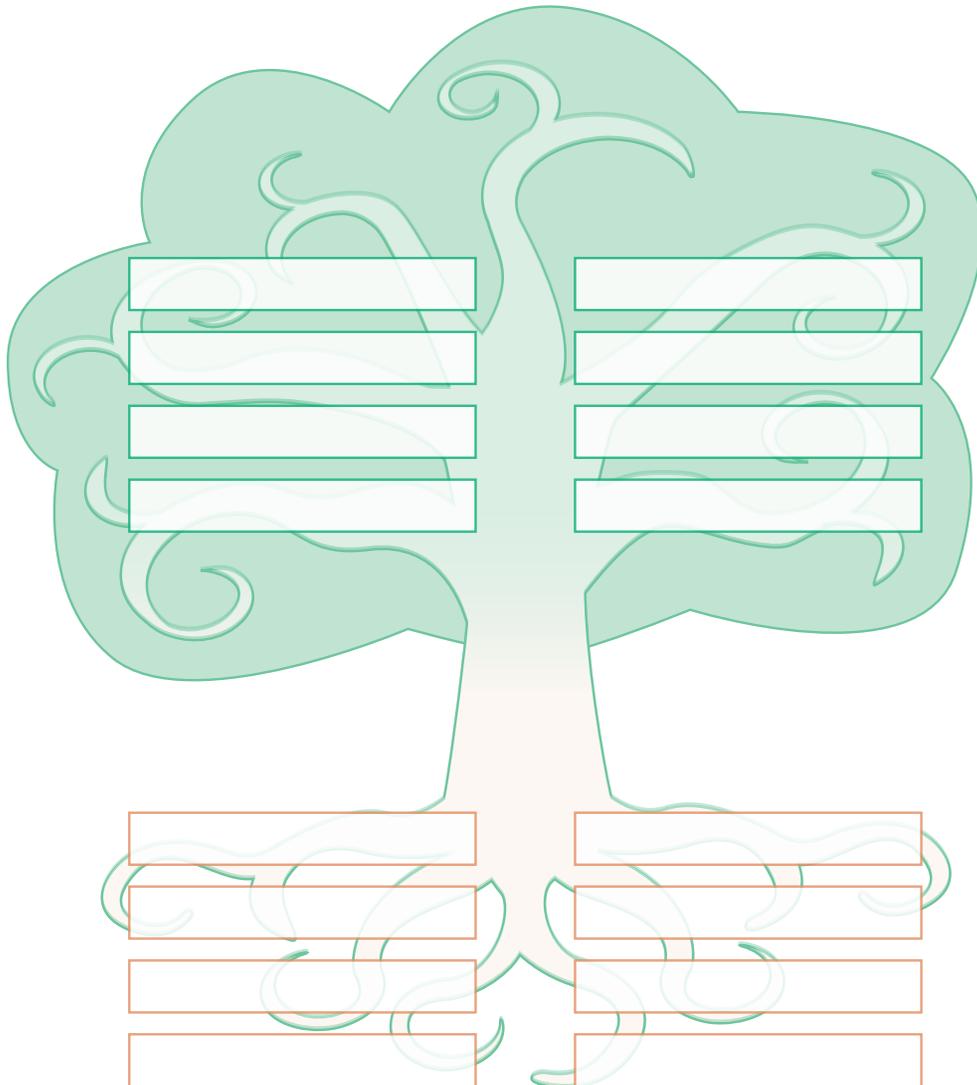
Recall your first encounter with Jesus. Describe how you “wanted” Him in that moment.

Think of where you are presently. How has your “want” changed?



Have you ever had a “before I knew it” time in your life, when you never intended to become numb to something but over time your habits desensitized you to it? Write about it.

This tree represents the wants you have—what you are currently looking for in your life. Write on the branches the more surface wants (again, not wrong—just different). Write on the roots the deeper wants. They can be spiritual or material; God knows and cares about them all.



DAY 4

# What Is in My Way?

What are some ways you've attempted to feel close to God that have made sense in the moment but proven futile or at least frustrating in the end?

There's so much happening here that I don't want you to miss. **Take a minute to notice the progression in this conversation and coinciding verses, and circle the words showing it.**

**What does this passage mean to you, in a modern context, and what can we learn from the Israelites in this moment?**

First, define *idolatry* in your own words.

Now, look up *idolatry*, ideally in a biblical commentary or the Logos Bible study app or (last option) Google.

Is there something you sense the Lord may be asking you to lay down for a time to see if it has become an idol? Name it without trying to excuse it or talk yourself out of it.

What would need to change in your life if God revealed to you that was an idol?

Write out a plan for breaking from (not doing the behavior of) your idol for a time in this chart. Include the specific behaviors you feel led to set aside, the length of time you'll fast from each, who your accountability partner(s) will be, better ways to replace that behavior, and Scriptures to dwell on.

Behaviors	
Length	
Accountability Partner(s)	
Better Ways	
Scriptures	

Try asking yourself these questions about each of your suspect behaviors. If you answer yes to any, it has likely become an idol.

DAY 5

# How Can I Have a Soul Revival?

Using this example, give your own answers  
(operating in the principle of the greater desire):

To Jesus' question "Do you want to be well?" \_\_\_\_\_

To Jesus' question "What do you want?"  
\_\_\_\_\_

Look up each of these short passages from Psalms and write them down.

Psalm 73:25–26

Psalm 27:4

Psalm 42:1–2

Psalm 63:1–2

Psalm 142:5

Now write your own expression of desire for the Lord:

Reread verses 2–3. What kind of people made up the Ephesian church? Write down all the qualities you can mine here.

Reread verse 4. What is the Lord after? (Hint: It's in the complaint.)

Take a minute to consider your distance from God in this moment or any past moments of your life. Think of it in the context of having left Him versus having lost Him. In what way(s) did you leave Him, and how does thinking about it like that make a difference with you?

Leaving Him	vs.	Losing Him

# Practicing Soul Revival

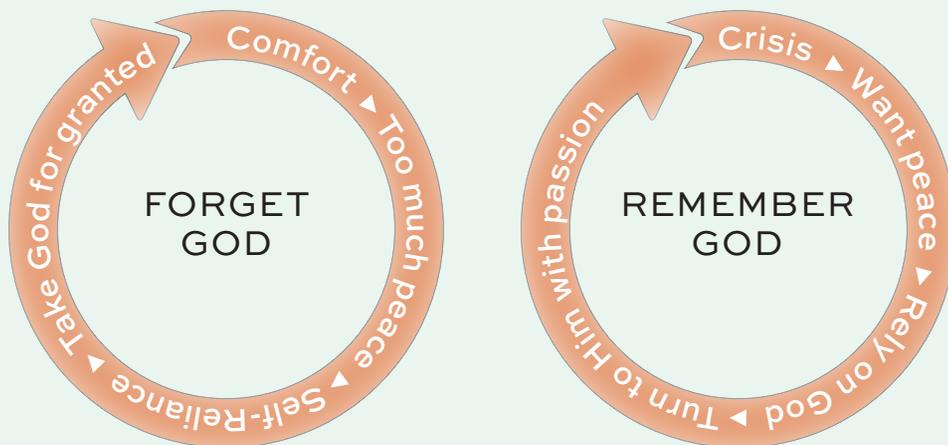
## REMEMBER—THE FIRST STEP

Write down Revelation 2:4–5a.

What is the phrase in verse 5a that stands out?

Remember a time in your life when you felt helpless and most needy of God. Write down the details. Were you at a comfortable place in your life or at a place of personal grief, lack, or crisis?

What was God's response?



## REPENT—THE SECOND STEP

Write down your definition of the word *repentance*.

Now look up the word, preferably at the Logos Bible study app or something similar, but (last resort) you can look on Google. Write down any differences you find between this definition and your own.

Read Revelation 2:5 again. What does the phrase “Turn back to me” mean to you?

Why do you think it's significant that the Lord complimented the good work and character of the Ephesians, particularly in light of this phrase in verse 5?



Reflect on your week. How might you remember, repent, and repeat this week?

Remember	Repent	Repeat

*Session 2*

# MORE THAN COMFORT

DAY 1

# Video and Outline

Stream the “More Than Comfort” (session 2) video and complete the session 2 outline as you watch.

- ✦ The idol of \_\_\_\_\_ might be what is stopping you from experiencing lasting, deep, and true revival.
- ✦ Everything has a \_\_\_\_\_. We just don’t always think about that at the time we are enjoying a temporary solution.
- ✦ Comfort in and of itself is not an idol. \_\_\_\_\_ is our great comforter, and He desires that we bring \_\_\_\_\_ to Him so He can properly comfort us.
- ✦ We turn comfort into an idol when we \_\_\_\_\_. The problem comes in when we try to comfort ourselves through \_\_\_\_\_ instead of Christ.

✦ Comfort presents like the best friend you will ever have, but in the process of “comforting” you, it \_\_\_\_\_ what you really want in \_\_\_\_\_ right out from under you.

✦ What comfort really does to you:

- It affects your relationships with \_\_\_\_\_.
- It affects your relationship with \_\_\_\_\_.
- It affects your relationship with \_\_\_\_\_.

✦ When God allows \_\_\_\_\_ in our lives, He does us the biggest favor we never wanted.

✦ Taking comfort into our own hands gets in our way because it keeps us from:

1. Knowing \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Living in \_\_\_\_\_ with a healthy \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Enjoying our full \_\_\_\_\_.

✦ God will always be the \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ comfort we need in the midst of this difficult life.

✦ As you seek to have revival in this area of your life and come back to God, \_\_\_\_\_ who He is as the great comforter, \_\_\_\_\_ from that comfort idol that’s gotten in your way, and \_\_\_\_\_ that continual seeking of Him to bring you what you need to soothe and relieve your weary soul.

DAY 2

# What Is My Real Issue?

Define *comfort* in your own words.

Look up *comfort* in an online dictionary, and write down that definition.

Recall a time in your life when comfort presented like a best friend but robbed you of something important by keeping you sedentary in your spiritual life, risk avoidant at work or in a relationship, or engaged in a negative lifestyle or habit that should have been addressed. Write down those circumstances.

How did that “comfortable” state keep you stagnant, denying you what you really wanted?  
What was your true desire?

Read the story of Jacob and Esau in Genesis 25:19–34.

Look at verses 29–30. What desire was Esau in tune with? How did he seek to comfort him-

self in that moment?

Look at verse 31. What exchange did Jacob propose?

Was it a worthy trade?

If not, why do you think Esau was willing to make the trade in the moment anyway?

What was the result, not only tangibly but emotionally, for Esau? (See v. 34.)

Consider the next chart in your pdf. Describe how comfort has taken each of these important things from you in some way. You may have more than one example. It's important to name them. I'll go first with mine.

Relationship to Others	Relationship to Self	Relationship to the Lord
Broken relationship for 5 years with a friend	Shame for not conquering something	Not experiencing true vibrancy in relationship with God


Choose a few to read now, read them all in one sitting, or save some to read when you need them most!

Exodus 14:14

Psalms 23:4

Psalms 32:7-8

Psalms 56:8

Psalms 116:2-4

Psalms 145:18-19

Isaiah 40:31

Isaiah 41:10

Isaiah 43:2

Matthew 11:28-30

John 14:27

Romans 8:28

Romans 8:38-39

Romans 15:13

1 Peter 5:7

1 Peter 5:10

DAY 3

# What Do I Want?

**Revisit John 1:35–38 to refresh your memory of the passage.**

What do you think some of the comforts a person in those times would have to “give up” to follow Jesus?

How would abandoning their comforts compare to abandoning ours today?

Complete the comfort chart by listing five things that you like the way you like them. What brings you comfort? Then beside each, list how this might change if you choose God over those comforts.

What gives me comfort?	How might this change if I choose God over comfort?

Did any of the answers in the “How might this change?” column feel negative or scary? (For example, “If I choose God over my comfort with alcohol, I’ll have to go to rehab or come clean with my kids, and that terrifies me!”) If so, do you believe that, ultimately, it is still the right choice? Why or why not?

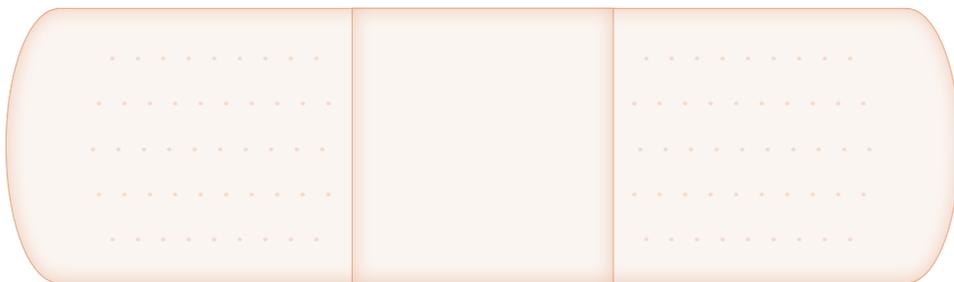
What decisions or lifestyle changes will you have to make to choose God over comfort? Are you willing to make them?

Who can you ask to help you or pray for you in these actions you need to take?

How has your desire for immediate relief made it harder for you to connect to God and enjoy a more rooted relationship through the years?

Which has been more of an issue for you—the immediate obedience or the long obedience—  
and in what ways?

What are some areas of your life you either currently want to Band-Aid or have Band-Aided in the past so you didn't have to see them, instead of doing the hard work of seeking healing? Write them on this Band-Aid.



Which of the above do you most yearn to restore in your relationship with God?

Write out a short prayer of intention toward God: “God, I want You more than the comfort of ...” or “God, I want *to want* You more than the comfort of ...” and pray it the rest of this week.

DAY 4

# What Is in My Way?

In light of this conversation, how does the temporary, worldly comfort seem to you now—  
still like a best friend, or more like the sneaky foe? Journal your thoughts here.

How can you begin to see our God of comfort as the comfort you want instead?

**Read Haggai 1:1–6. In your view, what is happening here?**

**Reread Haggai 1:4. Write down the question God asks the people. How does that speak to the comfort idol of indulgence?**

Reread verse 6. What are the four specific “You ... but ...” examples Haggai gives?

You ... But	Comforts Addressed

What visual image does Haggai use in the last part of verse 6? Draw it here.

How does picturing that help you see the false comfort of finding our security in work or earning money?

**Read Revelation 3:14–21. What was Laodicea’s abundance preventing them from seeing?**

What is your abundance not allowing you to see?

Recall a time when you operated as a person of the “now” decision instead of operating in the principle of the greater desire. How did that affect you?

What have you learned from the difference or the outcomes?

Read Romans 2:3–4 in *he Message* paraphrase.

What are your honest thoughts about these verses, particularly the statement “God is kind, but he’s not soft”?

Write out an honest prayer to the Lord, asking Him to reveal to you any sneaky comfort idol that might be in your way. Name each item on the list above, pause on each one, and ask the Lord if that is an area He needs to deal with you about. And then sit quietly, as long as possible ... and listen.

DAY 5

# How Can I Have a Soul Revival?

In the next chart, write down a decision you're currently facing, a feeling you're having about it, and if God or comfort is your greater desire in this situation.

Current Decision	Feeling about It	God or Comfort?

How does thinking about loneliness in the context of experiencing it with the Lord rather than trying to eradicate it completely change something for you?

How does that comfort you?

What did Jesus choose in Luke 2:41–52? Why is this a significant choice that defines wanting to be all in with God more than comfort?

What did Jesus choose in Matthew 27:32–56? Why is this most incredible event the greatest significant choice that defines wanting to be all in with God more than comfort?

Reflect on your week. How might you remember, repent, and repeat this week in light of the conversation on comfort?

Remember	Repent	Repeat

*Session 3*

# MORE THAN CONTROL

To follow along in the *I Want God*  
book, read chapters 6–7.

DAY 1

# Video and Outline

Stream the “More than Control” (session 3) video and complete the session 3 outline as you watch.

- ✦ With all the hardship of this world, the goodness of God doesn't always \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.
- ✦ We want God to make sense to us so that we can have some type of \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ over what is happening around us that we do not  
\_\_\_\_\_.
- ✦ It's the pull of control in us that presents in subtle ways through our frustration  
and even disillusionment that causes us to ask, \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_?
- ✦ Coming back to God is sometimes \_\_\_\_\_ what  
you've been trying to \_\_\_\_\_.

✦ When God seems to not make sense and things are out of our control, we can start to do one of these things:

1. We can \_\_\_\_\_.
2. We can \_\_\_\_\_.
3. We can try to \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

✦ We think controlling is the way, but in the end, control:

- \_\_\_\_\_.
- Leads to \_\_\_\_\_.
- Creates \_\_\_\_\_.

✦ The principle of the greater desire: forgoing \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_.

✦ \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ are closely connected.

✦ When the Lord says, “Fear not,” in places like Isaiah 41:10, He is not just calling us to \_\_\_\_\_ to Him; He is also calling us to \_\_\_\_\_.  
Think about it like Him also saying, “Control not.”

✦ We can know we are learning to \_\_\_\_\_ when we see ourselves trying to \_\_\_\_\_.

✦ \_\_\_\_\_ is the action we need when we feel afraid.

✦ We know of God’s great overcoming of this world, even as we live in a world that often doesn’t appear to be in any control. God assured us of this for one purpose: so that \_\_\_\_\_ we might have \_\_\_\_\_.

DAY 2

# What Is My Real Issue?

Have you ever had a relationship you cared about so much you wanted to control it, but you

wound up smothering it with your “care”? Write about that and what happened.

What might have happened if you had given that to God to manage rather than try to manage it yourself?

Have you ever thought of your desire for control as being in direct conflict with desiring God? Think about it now and how that has affected your relationship with Him, and write down some thoughts.

**Instructions:** List the things you want to control. Next, list your biggest fears. Then note where they overlap as a worst-case scenario.

Want to Control	Fears	Worst-Case Scenario	Reality
			God is in control
			God is in control
			God is in control
			God is in control
			God is in control

Look up the familiar verse John 16:33. What do the first two sentences of this verse say (in NLT)? Write them down.

Please note: This is a *when* statement, not an *if* statement. What does that mean to you?

What does the last sentence of this verse say? Write it down.

What does “overcome the world” mean to you?

There's a commonality of control in both parts of this verse. What is it?

Write down Psalm 91:1. Read it out loud two times. In what ways does this encourage you?

Read Jonah 1. How did Jonah try to control his situation in opposition to what God wanted?

How did that result in a mess for himself (and others)?

Have you ever experienced a "Jonah" moment, thinking you had a better idea than God's?

**Read Luke 10:38–42. How did Martha’s desire to control her environment and to be perfect get in her way of experiencing God?**

**Have you ever experienced a “Martha” moment?**

**How would it grieve you to know you had missed out because you were too busy controlling things? Write down how it would make you feel.**

Write a prayer of confession for your control, being specific, and asking the Lord to help you give over control to Him.

DAY 3

# What Do I Want?

So let's start by defining *control*. What is it, in your own words?

Now look it up in an online dictionary. Write down the definition.

Bring it closer to home. What does control look like in your daily life?

Add to this list. What else have you tried to do when God did not make sense and things felt out of your control?

What was the result?

**Read Genesis 6.** It did not seem logical that God would send a flood and that an ark would need to be built. What if Noah had tried to control the situation instead of trusting God? Write down your thoughts.

Jeremiah preached for forty years, and not a single person converted to the God of Israel.

What if Jeremiah had tried to take control of the situation rather than staying true to what God had called him to do? Write down your thoughts.

**Read Luke 5:4–11.** It did not seem logical to cast nets on the other side of the boat when the fishermen had been fishing all night. What if the men had exercised their control and refused to participate, missing the blessing of abundance on the other side? Write down your thoughts.

**Read John 6:1–14.** It did not seem logical to feed five thousand people with a few fish and loaves. What if the boy had refused to give up his lunch, disbelieving God could do anything with this meager offering? Write down your thoughts.

How has the pull toward information and knowledge sometimes kept you from relying on the Lord?

Recall a time when you thought you were in control, but you (ultimately) were not. What did you try to make happen? What actually happened? What did you/can you learn from this situation?

What is your feeling behind wanting to understand God logically? Name it.

Now read Isaiah 55:8–9. Since God’s ways and knowledge are not ours, what “right desire” can you replace wanting to understand God with, and what would that look like?

Write out Proverbs 16:9. What does this verse mean to you?

Have you ever wanted to live life “both ways”? Write down what life was like when you tried to live like that, and why that won’t work.

DAY 4

# What Is in My Way?

In session 1, we talked about idols. How is control an idol for you?

Describe two areas where you choose control over God. How do you attempt to stay in control over your life and even over God?

Describe a time when you felt God was silent. You asked. Others asked. You saw no change. You heard no response.

How did that impact your faith (positively or negatively)? In these moments, what would it look like to want the presence of God more than you want answers?

How did others react (withdrawal, anger, jealousy, resentment), and how did it make you feel? Did it change your course of action moving forward?

Describe a time when you felt misunderstood. What were the feelings around that? What would have happened if you had trusted God with that misrepresentation?

Spend a few minutes writing about how these things have led to controlling moments in your life—perhaps recalling a specific recent moment. Then write out a prayer giving that over to God.

God's silence during hard times:

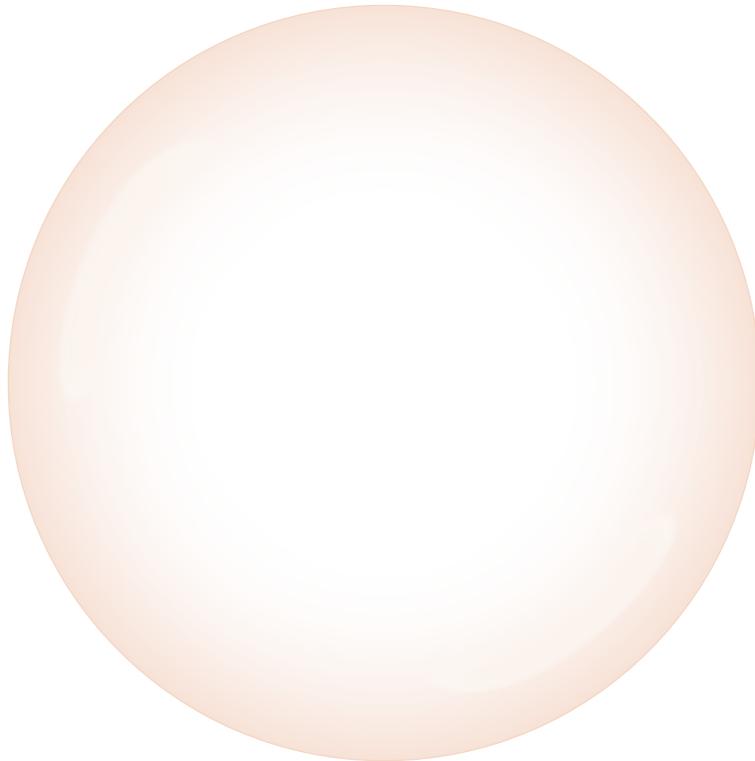
**Others' reactions to your decisions or obedience:**

**Feeling misunderstood:**

DAY 5

# How Can I Have a Soul Revival?

Write down all the people, situations, and things that you've tried to control inside this bubble. (For some of you, this bubble might not be big enough. No worries. Feel free to draw another one in your own journal.) Next to each thing you named, write a word that represents what you've tried to control about that person or thing.



Reflect on your week. How might you remember, repent, and repeat this week?

Remember	Repent	Repeat

*Session 4*

# MORE THAN POPULARITY

To follow along in the *I Want God*  
book, read chapters 8–9.

DAY 1

# Video and Outline

Stream the “More Than Popularity” (session 4) video and complete the session 4 outline as you watch.

Group leaders: See the session 4 guide in the back (p. 195) for group discussion information.

✦ The idol of \_\_\_\_\_ is really about \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

✦ There is a cycle of popularity that happens:

- We want to be \_\_\_\_\_ ► which creates \_\_\_\_\_  
► which dictates our \_\_\_\_\_ ► so we live as \_\_\_\_\_.

✦ Here’s how popularity (aka, the approval of man, people-pleasing) affects us:

1. It changes \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

2. It changes the \_\_\_\_\_ we are willing to hold and the \_\_\_\_\_ we are willing to have.
3. It changes our \_\_\_\_\_ and can form \_\_\_\_\_.

✦ John 12:43 sums it all up well when he writes of the Pharisees: “They loved \_\_\_\_\_ more than \_\_\_\_\_.”

✦ We crave these things:

1. \_\_\_\_\_ : to feel part of something important, part of a group, part of a family
2. \_\_\_\_\_ : to be loved for who we are, fully, completely, without strings, parameters, or conditions
3. \_\_\_\_\_ : to be recognized in our uniqueness, thoroughly understood
4. \_\_\_\_\_ : to leave a legacy and feel as though we matter

✦ It's not wrong to want to be \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, or \_\_\_\_\_, but when we want it so much we are willing to seek those things by means other than God, we take matters into our own hands and it often goes wrong.

✦ The one who is \_\_\_\_\_ of your soul's desire is the one who \_\_\_\_\_ you and \_\_\_\_\_ you most.

DAY 2

# What Is My Real Issue?

WHAT IS MY REAL ISSUE?

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First, I want you to define *popularity* in your own words.

Now, how does an online dictionary define it?

Thinking of this definition of *popularity*, how has your desire to be approved of, favored, accepted, or admired played out in your life and relationships?

How much did you struggle with wanting to be “popular” in these terms in the past? How much do you struggle with it in the present?

Consider this endless popularity-progression cycle:



How has this been true in your life? Write down some of the relationships this has affected.

Whom have you sought approval from to the point that it has changed how you acted?

How has wanting to be liked or approved of ever changed what you “fight for” (or caused you to back off from a worthy fight)? Write down a situation you can recall and what that looked like.

Describe a time you were tempted to water down a conviction or shy away from a conversation because you wanted to be accepted or admired.

Have you ever gotten caught up in feeling confident about how others have endorsed you to the point that you became prideful about it? Did anyone notice and call you out?

The chart below represents your relationship with popularity. I'll use mine as an example of how to start. On days 3 and 4, you'll come back to this chart to add your "befores" to the columns. Then on day 5, I'll ask you to add your "afters." Check back to see if you've been consistent in the changes—with the Lord's help!

### Popularity Statements

Before	After
I hope you like me.	Like me or not, I pray you cannot deny the presence of God in my life.
I hope I don't get canceled.	I cannot be silenced due to someone's disapproval when I never spoke out to gain anyone's applause.

DAY 3

# What Do I Want?

When was the first time you remember wanting someone's approval? Write down who it was, what was happening, and how the events made you feel (in the process and in the end).

Recall a time when getting someone's approval resulted in disappointment. Write down the details of that situation.

Describe the exhaustion you feel when you are chasing the goal of people's approval. Why do you think this results in exhaustion?

Write out Matthew 6:2. What was the issue (tied to their approval seeking) Jesus was calling the Pharisees on the carpet for?

Write out Matthew 23:5. What were the Pharisees doing to get noticed?

Write out Luke 18:11–12. What was the Pharisee in this passage doing for his own popularity, and in what way did that offend God? (See also v. 14.)

Write out John 12:43. What did the Pharisees love more than the praise of God?

Which of these core needs resonates the most with you? In what ways?

Now that you better understand the nature of your need for popularity, return to the chart on page 128 and add some more of your own “before” statements to it.

DAY 4

# What Is in My Way?

Describe a time you allowed your desire for approval to dictate a decision. What does this reveal about your need for approval?

How different would your life look if you truly valued God's approval above everyone else's? What choices might be different?

1. Weak or nonexistent boundaries and saying yes to things when you wanted to say no.

**What are ways you've struggled to set boundaries because your yes involved a desire to please people?**

2. Worrying too much about what others think of you.

**Can you remember a time when you chose not to speak up because you chose human praise and acceptance over Jesus? Describe how you felt after the choice was made.**

**Name two practical ways we can silence the voices of others and instead focus on God.**

3. Overexplaining or overapologizing behavior.

When was the last time you overexplained yourself to another person? How did he or she receive it? How did you feel at the time you were doing it and after? Why might the behavior prove futile?

Now that you better understand the nature of your need for popularity, return to the chart on page 128 and add some more of your own “before” statements to it.

DAY 5

# How Can I Have a Soul Revival?

Write down your thoughts about this passage.

What does *real* life look like? How would you live if Christ were your life? What is one step you can take toward being content with obscurity?

## Practicing Soul Revival

So let's focus once again on our revival formula from Revelation, with an emphasis on popularity:

### REMEMBER

When we seek approval and popularity rather than God, we leave our first love, replacing Him with self. We are all created usable by God, but not everyone gets used. Our desire to be popular with other people hinders God's movement in us. God will let us choose

Describe a recent decision that you can now see had more to do with seeking popularity than with following God.

### REPENT

Choose one area where your actions reflect a desire for popularity—people-pleasing, image management (just to name a couple). How might you about-face in that area? What would it look like to change?

### REPEAT

What is one choice or change you need to make today? How can you move toward “God-courage” to ultimately help you with your need for approval?

Now that you better understand the nature of your need for popularity, return to the chart on page 128 and add your potential “after” statements to it.

Reflect on your week. How might you remember, repent, and repeat this week?

Remember	Repent	Repeat

*Session 5*

# MORE THAN BLESSING

To follow along in the *I Want God*  
book, read chapters 10–11.

DAY 1

# Video and Outline

Stream the “More than Blessing” (session 5) and complete the session 5 outline as you watch.

Group leaders: See the session 5 guide in the back (p. 196) for group discussion information.

✦ The way we see \_\_\_\_\_ is tied to the way we \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ in our lives.

✦ A right view of blessing:

1. It comes from \_\_\_\_\_.

2. It's rooted in \_\_\_\_\_.

3. Blessing is ultimately \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

4. Blessing is directly tied to the benefits of  
\_\_\_\_\_.

✦ Sometimes the reason we don't feel blessed is because \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

✦ Not feeling blessed is often due to our \_\_\_\_\_ rather than our \_\_\_\_\_. This can be because of one or more of these things:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

✦ When it comes to blessing, we have a \_\_\_\_\_ of what it is and how God wants to bless us in \_\_\_\_\_.

✦ As a result of skewed understanding, we form a \_\_\_\_\_ relationship with God, which has two negative effects:

1. It becomes or stays very \_\_\_\_\_. (As we center on how we can get more, we become more and more inward focused. The result = pride.)
2. It robs us of \_\_\_\_\_ with the Lord, and in the end, we miss \_\_\_\_\_ blessings. (When we misunderstand true blessings, we may miss the package[s] they come in that we are not expecting. The result = disappointment and a lack of true joy.)

✦ We've all had times when we've settled for a transactional relationship with the Lord, but God is ready and waiting for us to \_\_\_\_\_ and come back to \_\_\_\_\_.

DAY 2

# What Is My Real Issue?

How do you define the word *blessing*?

How is it defined in an online dictionary?

Describe someone you view as “blessed.” What does their life look like? What kind of personality do they have, what do they talk about, what is their relationship with the Lord like?

Has your definition of *blessed* changed over the years? If so, how?

**What would you add to this list? What blessings have you personally enjoyed that are listed here? Pause and thank the Lord for them!**

Considering blessing, and particularly the prayer of Jabez in this proper light, how does asking God to bless you look a bit different?

Which of these two resonates most with you and why? How has your focus on the “blessing” had you missing God?

Write down 1 Corinthians 13:11. Though in the context of love, how does this apply to what happens when we spiritually mature in our view of blessing?

Read Matthew 6:1–6. How do these verses apply to the right view of blessing?

Write down Matthew 6:19–20. Why is blessing in the future ultimately for the best?

Write down Psalm 103:2.

With your Bible (or Bible app) open to the entire chapter of Psalm 103, write down all the “benefits” you read of God Himself.

DAY 3

# What Do I Want?

What are some ways you have felt “kept” or taken care of by God, even in the midst of life being hard or complicated? Have you ever considered this a blessing?

What are some ways you have felt God giving you grace and mercy? Have you considered this a blessing?

Close your eyes and picture the Lord turning His face toward you. What feelings come up?  
How does it feel to get the attention of God?

Write down Matthew 6:33. What is the command here, and how does it support the “first desire, then blessings” principle?

DAY 4

# What Is in My Way?

Describe a time when you didn't get the "blessing" you thought you wanted—only to realize later it wouldn't have been a blessing after all. How did God bless you by withholding it? Write down those details. (And then pause and thank the Lord for it!)

In what way(s) can you apply Paul's testimony to your own life desires?

If you've been thinking about blessings in terms of the physical, how can you shift your focus to asking God for more, not less (more being Him)?

List your top three prayer requests of God below. How can you make the shift to begin praying for more of God in those requests?

Initial Requests	Amended Requests

How have your assumptions/expectations prevented you from seeing God's blessings?

When was a time your vision was limited and because of it you missed seeing a blessing that was right in front of you?

What blessing have you missed because of your quest for a *different* blessing?

Write a prayer to God sharing the ways you want to exchange the small asks for the bigger way of knowing God more.

DAY 5

# How Can I Have a Soul Revival?

## REMEMBER

**How does remembering the cross change the idea of blessing for you? How might your daily life and habits reflect this belief?**

**Read Psalm 104.** Write down the blessings of who God is in the context of all He has done as you read this incredible passage (a favorite of mine!).

REPENT

Write down a prayer of confession and of blessing for God.

REPEAT

What is one spiritual discipline you have that helps you want God most?

What is at least one daily spiritual habit you want to develop to increase your desire to want God most?

Reflect on your week. How might you remember, repent, and repeat this week, focusing on desiring God more than you desire His blessing?

Remember	Repent	Repeat

*Session 6*

# COMING BACK

To follow along in the *I Want God*  
book, read chapter 12.

DAY 1

# Video and Outline

Stream the “Coming Back to God” (session 6) video and complete the session 6 outline as you watch.

Group leaders: See the session 6 guide in the back (p. 198) for group discussion information.

- ✦ There’s only been one \_\_\_\_\_,  
and it’s \_\_\_\_\_.
- ✦ In His kindness, God was willing to restore them if they would return to Him  
in \_\_\_\_\_.  
It’s the same grace He is willing to extend to us today, no matter our  
\_\_\_\_\_.
- ✦ This is a huge theme with the Lord—from Genesis to Revelation, from the Israelites  
to the church at Ephesus—always a call to return to Him with \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.
- ✦ This is not about mustering up a burst of \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ for a comeback. It is bringing your \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ and saying, “I’m here, wanting to love You most. May I come back?”

- ✦ The prodigal son wanted freedom. But, ultimately, he wanted what we all want: \_\_\_\_\_.
- ✦ Most of us don’t really know what we want in life because we have settled for so long for \_\_\_\_\_. So we are quick to walk away from our \_\_\_\_\_, Jesus.
- ✦ No matter what has been in the way, it’s not \_\_\_\_\_. Too many times, we think we have to stay somewhere because it’s what we know, but that’s not biblical. It is counter to a God who says, “See, I am doing a \_\_\_\_\_! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland” (Isa. 43:19 NIV).
- ✦ The truth is:
  - You are never \_\_\_\_\_.
  - You can always \_\_\_\_\_.
  - You can forever \_\_\_\_\_.
- ✦ You will never regret \_\_\_\_\_. There will never be anything worth more than giving your entire life to Jesus Christ, the great Lover of your soul.
- ✦ Remember Him forever. Repent often. Repeat the \_\_\_\_\_ that draw you closer to \_\_\_\_\_ every day for the rest of your life.

DAY 2

# What Is My Real Issue?

MY LIFE'S JOURNEY



Journal some of the highs and lows of your life on the timeline below and on the following pages. On it list things like walking away from God, coming back, pivotal moments, and so on.

Now looking back, how has your love story with Jesus affected your life story?

I

## MY LIFE'S JOURNEY (cont.)



What has it looked like in your life to need to come back to the Lord? Are you at a place that you need to come back right now?

The form consists of a large rectangular area divided into three horizontal bands. The top band is light orange, the middle band is light green, and the bottom band is a darker shade of green. A horizontal line with four tick marks is drawn across the middle band. This area is intended for the user to write their response to the question above.

How and where do you need God in your life right now? How are you reaching for other things instead of pursuing Him in that need?

How much do you need to feel the welcoming arms of the Lord holding you right now? Write down a prayer of complete abandon in your weariness and wanting. Ask Him to hold you. He is faithful and willing.

DAY 3

# What Do I Want?

Write about a time you pursued something that felt like an urgent want or need, and you acted foolishly in your pursuit of it. (Or a time you recall someone close to you doing this.) What were some of the ramifications of that pursuit?

Describe a time when you suspect what you were looking for wasn't your actual need? Write about that.

DAY 4

# What Is in My Way?

Have you ever felt intimidated to come back to God? How did that get in your way of returning to Him in love and vulnerability?

Has fear or disbelief ever kept you from coming back to God? Write about that.

What scares you most about wanting God over everything else?

What scares you most about giving up your idols?

Has pride ever kept you from coming back to God? Write about that.

Has apathy ever kept you from coming back to God? Write about that.

Have relationships with people ever kept you from coming back to God? Write about that.

Write an honest prayer sharing how you feel about coming back. Name your emotions in this moment. Confess to God anything you sense Him asking you to release that has been standing in the way of your closeness. Even in this moment, how do you feel as you write out this prayer?

DAY 5

# How Can I Have a Soul Revival?

# Practicing Soul Revival

## REMEMBER

Create a practical remembrance of God.

- Choose a visual representation from the following ideas:
  - a ring, bracelet, or some other jewelry
  - a stone in your yard or in a jar

- a note card on your bathroom mirror
- a print to hang on your wall or sit on your desk

Why did you choose this representation? How does this visual piece remind you of God? What is the significance?

- **Make a Jesus memory book or box:** Create this remembrance by filling it with your Jesus story. Continue to add mementos, such as quotes, notes, or anything that reminds you to want God most.

## REPENT

As you look back over our six weeks together, what do you feel you most need to repent of?

Consider telling a friend about this repentance. Ask her to hold you accountable as you live and pray toward wanting God most.

## REPEAT

How will you guard against moving away from God in the future? Don't let your business or your working "for God" draw you away from Him. Remember that the church at Ephesus was busy being good, but they forgot the all-important aspect of a vibrant relationship with God. If we want more of God, we have to take this step of moving forward, which is going back and doing what we did at first.

**Look back at session 1: What was your relationship with God like at first?**

**What did you do at first?**

**How has your relationship with God changed and grown? Describe it.**

**If you've grown in your relationship during these six weeks (which is my prayer!), how will you continue repeating the habits you've been growing in?**

What is it like now, wanting God more?

Have you come back?

For one final time ... reflect on your week. How might you remember, repent, and repeat this week?

Remember	Repent	Repeat


**What does a life look like that remembers, repents, and repeats? How will you hold this tight as you move forward?**

# As We Close Out This Study

# Leader's Guide

## Session 1: Revival

### Discussion Starter

After gathering, help your group get acquainted using the following points.

- Get the group started with questions like these: “We’re just getting started on this topic, and some people here might be new to each other, but let’s dive right in! What made you want to do this particular study?” (Find out if anyone wants specific questions answered.) “Why are you here? What about this topic attracted you?”
- To understand what most people think about the idea of revival, ask studiers to share if they have ever attended a revival or studied any revivals from history. What’s their personal experience with or understanding of them? (This study is great for both veteran studiers and new believers, since many won’t be familiar with revivals of old, so it will feel like an even playing field.)
- Invite discussion about what everyone hopes to take away at the completion of the study. Ask studiers to write down their answers somewhere to look back on later.

Read Psalm 142:5 as an introduction to the idea of desiring God. Then ask:

- “What have you always thought about the idea of wanting God versus needing God?”
- “How do you think wanting God affects your daily life?”

Watch the session 1 video. Use this completed outline to guide your discussion time.

- ✦ Revivals are incredible moves of God.
- ✦ Revivals start inside the soul of a someone who is coming to God for the first time or coming back to God with a ready and contrite heart.
- ✦ Revival isn't just about a corporate gathering. It's about what God does to bring you back to life.
- ✦ Desperation is often the exact right positioning to be in to bring on needed revival.
- ✦ Cycle of longing:
  1. We have a longing for something.
  2. We act on the longing.
  3. We experience often temporary results that satisfy the longing.
  4. We still long and either change our longing to something else ... or change our method of getting the same longing in our persistence.
- ✦ Jesus Himself asked the very question “What do you want?” in John 1—a question that went straight to longing.
- ✦ The word that is repeated three times in this passage (Matt. 22:37), *ALL*, tells us what kind of heart God wants. It's also the kind of life God wants from us and for us: the all-in life.
- ✦ If we don't want God the most, if He's not our primary longing, then today can start a new positioning: a heart that is postured and ready for revival.

- ✦ The benefit of knowing what you want: the complications of daily life decisions become a lot clearer and less complicated.
- ✦ A good way to know if something has become an idol in your life is to ask yourself these questions:
  1. Do I try hard to keep something and will I think of creative ways to keep it?
  2. Do I not tell people the full truth about the hold it has on me?
  3. Do I grieve letting it go?
- ✦ God may want to do something around us, but first He wants to do something in us.

Ask a few questions from the session as time allows.

Close your time in prayer.

## Session 2: More Than Comfort

### Discussion Starter

After gathering and getting settled in, discuss the following points.

- Ask: “What comes to mind when you think of the word *comfort*?” Take only a few minutes to share responses.
- Ask studiers to share a favorite story from Scripture about when God comforted someone.
- Then ask the group to share their own personal stories about a time they sought to comfort themselves versus a time God comforted them. (Talk about the differences.)

**Read Romans 2:4.** (I recommend *The Message* paraphrase, which can be found online at sites like BibleGateway.com.)

- Invite discussion about how God calling us to more often disrupts our comfort but is for our good.
- Touch on the story of Jacob and Esau in Genesis 25. Discuss how, in the end, Esau's desire for human comfort (in the form of food) cost him what he really wanted, and how we relate to that.

**Watch the session 2 video.** Use this completed outline to guide your discussion time.

- ✦ The idol of **comfort** might be what is stopping you from experiencing lasting, deep, and true revival.
- ✦ Everything has a **cost**. We just don't always think about that at the time we are enjoying a temporary solution.
- ✦ Comfort in and of itself is not an idol. **God Himself** is our great comforter, and He desires that we bring **our burdens** to Him so He can properly comfort us.
- ✦ We turn comfort into an idol when we **elevate it**. The problem comes in when we try to comfort ourselves through **temporary measures** instead of Christ.
- ✦ Comfort presents like the best friend you will ever have, but in the process of "comforting" you, it **robs** what you really want in **life** right out from under you.
- ✦ What comfort really does to you:
  - It affects your relationships with **others**.
  - It affects your relationship with **yourself**.
  - It affects your relationship with **God**.
- ✦ When God allows **discomfort** in our lives, He does us the biggest favor we never wanted.
- ✦ Taking comfort into our own hands gets in our way because it keeps us from:
  1. Knowing **who we really are**.
  2. Living in **freedom** with a healthy **perspective**.
  3. Enjoying our full **potential for Christ**.

- ✦ God will always be the true and lasting comfort we need in the midst of this difficult life.
- ✦ As you seek to have revival in this area of your life and come back to God, remember who He is as the great comforter, repent from that comfort idol that's gotten in your way, and repeat that continual seeking of Him to bring you what you need to soothe and relieve your weary soul.

Ask a few questions from the session as time allows.

Close your time in prayer.

## Session 3: More Than Control

### Discussion Starter

After gathering and getting settled in, discuss the following points.

- Ask: “What is your response to the word *control*?” Take only a few minutes to share responses.
- Ask studiers to share a favorite story from Scripture about when someone tried to control the hand of God. How did it turn out?
- Then ask: “In what way(s) have you ever tried to control God?” Encourage studiers to be honest as they share. Be ready to lead by going first. (Think about the when—wanting God to do things on your timetable; the what—wanting God to do what we want and being frustrated when He doesn't; the how—we pray and say, “God, I will do this if You will do that ...”)

### Read John 16:33.

- Discuss what this verse tells us about control and what part of life is up to us and what is up to God.

Watch the session 3 video. Use this completed outline to guide your discussion time.

- ✦ With all the hardship of this world, the goodness of God doesn't always make logical sense.
- ✦ We want God to make sense to us so that we can have some type of control over what is happening around us that we do not understand.
- ✦ It's the pull of control in us that presents in subtle ways through our frustration and even disillusionment that causes us to ask, Why isn't God doing what we want?
- ✦ Coming back to God is sometimes surrendering what you've been trying to control.
- ✦ When God seems to not make sense and things are out of our control, we can start to do one of these things:
  1. We can doubt.
  2. We can become angry.
  3. We can try to take matters into our own hands.
- ✦ We think controlling is the way, but in the end, control:
  - Exhausts us.
  - Leads to disillusionment.
  - Creates distance from God.
- ✦ The principle of the greater desire: forgoing what you want in the moment for what you want most.
- ✦ Fear and control are closely connected.
- ✦ When the Lord says, "Fear not," in places like Isaiah 41:10, He is not just calling us to release our fears to Him; He is also calling us to surrender our control. Think about it like Him also saying, "Control not."
- ✦ We can know we are learning to trust God more when we see ourselves trying to control our circumstances less.

- ✦ **Prayer** is the action we need when we feel afraid.
- ✦ We know of God's great overcoming of this world, even as we live in a world that often doesn't appear to be in any control. God assured us of this for one purpose: so that **in Him** we might have **peace**.

Ask a few questions from the session as time allows.

Close your time in prayer.

## Session 4: More Than Popularity

### Discussion Starter

After gathering and getting settled in, discuss the following points.

- Ask: "What is your response to the word *popularity*?" Take only a few minutes to share responses.
- Ask studiers to share a favorite story from Scripture about when someone's behavior was more about pleasing others than about obeying God. How did it turn out?
- Then ask them to share their own stories with people-pleasing and seeking approval or popularity. Encourage studiers to look beyond a high school definition of *popularity* and think about ways the approval of man affects their lives today, perhaps in even greater measure (for example, being unwilling to speak up for Christ, not wanting to witness, overextending your schedule, and so on). Ask for honesty as they share. Be ready to lead by going first.

**Read Galatians 1:10.** (I recommend the CEV translation, which can be found online at sites like BibleGateway.com.)

- Discuss how Paul was saying in this verse that pleasing man is "off mission," how that affects us, and one way this week to get back on course.

Watch the session 4 video. Use this completed outline to guide your discussion time.

- ✦ The idol of popularity is really about wanting approval by others.
- ✦ There is a cycle of popularity that happens:
  - We want to be popular ► which creates motives ► which dictates our actions ► so we live as people-pleasers.
- ✦ Here's how popularity (aka, the approval of man, people-pleasing) affects us:
  1. It changes what we want and will fight for.
  2. It changes the convictions we are willing to hold and the conversations we are willing to have.
  3. It changes our dependence on God and can form pride within us.
- ✦ John 12:43 sums it all up well when he writes of the Pharisees: “They loved human praise more than the praise of God.”
- ✦ We crave these things:
  1. Acceptance: to feel part of something important, part of a group, part of a family
  2. Unconditional love: to be loved for who we are, fully, completely, without strings, parameters, or conditions
  3. Being known: to be recognized in our uniqueness, thoroughly understood
  4. Significance: to leave a legacy and feel as though we matter
- ✦ It's not wrong to want to be accepted, known, significant, or unconditionally loved, but when we want it so much we are willing to seek those things by means other than God, we take matters into our own hands and it often goes wrong.
- ✦ The one who is worthy of your soul's desire is the one who knows you and loves you most.

Ask a few questions from the session as time allows.

Close your time in prayer.

## Session 5: More Than Blessing

### Discussion Starter

After gathering and getting settled in, discuss the following points.

- Ask: “What is your definition of the word *blessing*?” Take only a few minutes to share responses.
- Ask students to share a favorite story from Scripture about when someone was blessed by God and what this looked like. Was the blessing what the world might expect?
- Then ask them to share their own stories of blessing in their lives. Did they feel God has blessed them, and how? Did they ever feel He has blessed others at times and bypassed them, and what made them think or feel that way? Listen as they share, and withhold judgment or overly spiritual quick responses. Be ready to lead by going first.

### Read Ephesians 1:3.

- Discuss what this verse means, particularly the phrase “who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places” (ESV).

**Watch the session 5 video.** Use this completed outline to guide your discussion time.

- ✦ The way we see **blessing** is tied to the way we **experience the blessings** in our lives.
- ✦ A right view of blessing:
  1. It comes from **spiritual maturity**.
  2. It's rooted in **the Bible**.

3. Blessing is ultimately for heaven, not for earth.
4. Blessing is directly tied to the benefits of God Himself.

- ✦ Sometimes the reason we don't feel blessed is because we can't see it.
- ✦ Not feeling blessed is often due to our perspective rather than our reality. This can be because of one or more of these things:
  1. Assumptions/Expectations
  2. Limited Vision
  3. Distraction
- ✦ When it comes to blessing, we have a skewed understanding of what it is and how God wants to bless us in the supernatural versus the natural.
- ✦ As a result of skewed understanding, we form a transactional relationship with God, which has two negative effects:
  1. It becomes or stays very self-focused. (As we center on how we can get more, we become more and more inward focused. The result = pride.)
  2. It robs us of real depth with the Lord, and in the end, we miss true blessings. (When we misunderstand true blessings, we may miss the package[s] they come in that we are not expecting. The result = disappointment and a lack of true joy.)
- ✦ We've all had times when we've settled for a transactional relationship with the Lord, but God is ready and waiting for us to see Him for the blessing He is and come back to the purity of just wanting Him.

Ask a few questions from the session as time allows.

Close your time in prayer.

## Session 6: Coming Back

### Discussion Starter

After gathering and getting settled in, discuss the following points.

- Ask: “What comes to mind when someone talks about the word *comeback*?”  
Take only a few minutes to share responses.
- Ask: “What is your definition of the word *repentance*?”
- Discuss what it would mean to consider a comeback in the idea of “coming back together” with the Lord through the act of repentance. How might that change the way your group looked at the world’s definition of a comeback?

### Read Joel 2:13.

- Discuss how the mercy and compassion of the Lord in our returning to Him changes our willingness to come back to Him and how He’s different from any human we have been distant from.

**Watch the session 6 video.** Use this completed outline to guide your discussion time.

- ✦ There’s only been one true lover of your soul, and it’s Jesus Christ.
- ✦ In His kindness, God was willing to restore them if they would return to Him in repentance and faithfulness. It’s the same grace He is willing to extend to us today, no matter our circumstances.
- ✦ This is a huge theme with the Lord—from Genesis to Revelation, from the Israelites to the church at Ephesus—always a call to return to Him with grace and love and acceptance.
- ✦ This is not about mustering up a burst of spiritual energy for a comeback. It is bringing your exhausted soul to the Lord and saying, “I’m here, wanting to love You most. May I come back?”

- ✦ The prodigal son wanted freedom. But, ultimately, he wanted what we all want: acceptance and love.
- ✦ Most of us don't really know what we want in life because we have settled for so long for lesser loves. So we are quick to walk away from our real love, Jesus.
- ✦ No matter what has been in the way, it's not the end of the story. Too many times, we think we have to stay somewhere because it's what we know, but that's not biblical. It is counter to a God who says, "See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland" (Isa. 43:19 NIV).
- ✦ The truth is:
  - You are never too far gone.
  - You can always change.
  - You can forever come back.
- ✦ You will never regret giving Jesus everything. There will never be anything worth more than giving your entire life to Jesus Christ, the great Lover of your soul.
- ✦ Remember Him forever. Repent often. Repeat the practices that draw you closer to His heart every day for the rest of your life.

Ask a few questions from the session as time allows.

Close your time in prayer.