**LifeGroup Study**

**GOOD INTENTIONS BAD IDEAS**

**Always Trust Your Feelings?**

**2022-10-23**

**Leader Notes**

**OVERVIEW:**

Welcome back to our series, “Good Intentions Bad Ideas”! Over these three weeks, we’re looking at 3 cultural myths that can mess with our minds. We’re learning how we can see these myths for what they are and live in a different way, the Way of Jesus. Our myth for week 2 is, “Always Trust Your Feelings”. Feelings/emotions can be good and helpful. They can also be deceptive and fickle and we shouldn't make them our ultimate guides. In this week’s study we’ll look at the importance of seeking God’s wisdom as our ultimate guide in life. We’ll explore habits to cultivate a lifestyle of seeking and walking in God’s wisdom.

**ICEBREAKER:** That Was Hard, But I’m Glad I Did It!

Think back to your years as a teen or a young adult . What challenge did you take on that seemed hard at the time, but in looking back, you’re glad you did it? Maybe for you it was signing up for a difficult course at school, learning to play an instrument, or trying out for a team. What hard thing did you take on? What did you learn from it? **Share your story with the group!**

**STUDY:**

1. On Sunday Pete addressed the cultural myth, “Always trust your feelings.” We live in a culture where we push against authority and truth claims which leaves us with only our own feelings and thoughts as a guide. **How did Pete’s teaching speak to you about the myth, “Always trust your feelings”?**

Rather than trusting our feelings to be our ultimate guide in life, God guides us to seek Him.

There is a source of truth and wisdom we can trust. The wisdom God gives to us in the Bible is something we should seek regularly and apply to our lives.

For our study, let’s explore the value of God’s wisdom and look at how we can cultivate a life that regularly seeks and lives by His wisdom. To help make this practical for you, ask this question as we begin – **“What temptation or decision am I facing where I need God’s wisdom?”** Keep this area in mind as we go through our study.

1. WE CAN’T ALWAYS TRUST OUR FEELINGS

Our feelings are important. We should acknowledge them and not try to stuff them down. But we can’t always trust our feelings.

READ: Jeremiah 17:9-10

**9**The heart is deceitful above all things,
    and desperately sick;
    who can understand it?
**10**“I the Lord search the heart
    and test the mind,

* **How is this passage a reminder to us that we can’t always trust our feelings?**

LEADER NOTE: In our culture today, feelings are king. “If you feel it, you should do it!” is a mantra many would live by. But Jeremiah warns us that our feelings can deceive us. If your heart tells you to do something that is contrary to God’s wisdom, don’t trust your heart!

WISDOM DEFINED

Biblical wisdom is living in light of God’s revealed truth to us in the Bible. Knowledge and wisdom are two different things. Knowledge is about information. Wisdom is about living in a right way as a result of what we know.

1. READ: Proverbs 1:1-7
* **What do we learn here about wisdom?**

LEADER NOTE: Wisdom must be “attained” (vs. 1). It doesn’t happen automatically. It is something we grow in. Wisdom and discipline go together. To experience God’s wisdom, we must cultivate a disciplined life, a life that prioritizes walking in God’s wisdom. Wisdom is about making choices and living in a way that honours God. There is a way of life that demonstrates wisdom (see vs. 2 - doing what is right. Being just and fair). Wisdom is grounded in the fear of the LORD (vs. 7).

JESUS, THE WISDOM AND POWER OF GOD

1. READ: 1 Corinthians 1:18-31

**How do these verses contrast the world’s wisdom with God’s wisdom?** (see vs. 18 – 25)

LEADER NOTE: There is a marked difference between the world’s wisdom and God’s wisdom. The world seeks wisdom outside of Jesus. This is why the world rejects the message of the cross. The message of the cross, while seeming foolish to those who are living for this world, is the most powerful demonstration of God’s wisdom. We should not be surprised when people following the ways of the world mock or reject the message of Jesus. But we also shouldn’t despair. Ultimately, God’s wisdom will be proved right. (1 Cor. 1:19)

1. **What do we learn here about true wisdom?** (see vs. 26 – 31)

LEADER NOTE: True wisdom is found only in Jesus. (see vs. 30). In Him we are made right with God, given power to live holy lives and redeemed by Him.

1. HOW CAN I TAP INTO GOD’S WISDOM FOR MY LIFE?

There is an ancient practice called *lectio divina* (Latin for “spiritual reading) that has been used for centuries to help followers of Jesus grow in God’s wisdom. There are four basic components to this practice – READ, THINK, PRAY, LIVE. Let’s explore these four components to understand how they can help us tap into God’s wisdom for our lives.

1. READ, THINK

READ Psalm 119:97-98

“Oh, how I love your law! I meditate on it all day long. Your commands make me wiser than my enemies, for they are ever with me.”

* To tap into God’s wisdom for my life, I need to cultivate a regular habit of reading and thinking about God’s Word, the Bible. **What tips might you give to someone who is wanting to grow in their habit of reading and thinking about the Bible?**

Here are some helpful tips to cultivate the habit of reading and thinking about the Bible.

* Choose a plan. Youversion.com has tonnes of reading plans to choose from – all of them are free!
* Choose a time. Pick a time in your day where you can read and think. Many choose the beginning of the day, but for you the best time may be while the kids are sleeping or later in the evening when things quiet down.
* Choose a place. Pick a location where you will read. This should ideally be a quiet place as free as possible from noise and distraction.
* Use S.O.A.P.

S = Scripture. Use a translation that is easy for you to read and digest.

O = Observe. Here’s the THINK part! Ask, “what does this passage tell me about who God is?” What does it tell me about who I am?”

A = Apply. Ask, “How can I apply to my life what I have read today?”

P = Pray. Talk with God about what you’ve read. Thank Him for His wisdom.

“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all **wisdom**, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.” Colossians 3:16 NIV

1. PRAY

READ: James 1:5 aloud together as a group.

“If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you.”

* In this verse, the context of seeking God’s wisdom is that we would face life’s trials with “pure joy”.
* **What is it about trials/temptations that make it particularly important for us to seek God’s wisdom?**

 LEADER NOTES: Trials/temptations, can derail our walk with God. They can weaken our faith or make us doubt God’s character. When Jesus faced trials/temptations, He sought God’s wisdom in the Scriptures. Jesus battled Satan’s lies with the truth of God’s wisdom. (see Matthew 4:1-11)

* Does anyone in the group have an example from your experience of asking for and receiving wisdom from God? **Share your experience with the group.**

1. LIVE

READ: James 1:22-25

* **What is the danger in reading the Bible but not living by what it says?**

LEADER NOTE: James tells us that if we read the Bible but don’t live by what it says we are deceiving ourselves. We are like a person who looks at their image in the mirror but as soon as they turn away they forget what they look like! Those who read the Word and do what it says are truly blessed.

READ: 1 Corinthians 2:12-13

God has given us his Holy Spirit to empower us to live in us the way of wisdom.

* **How can we live by the Spirit?**

LEADER NOTE: We live by the Spirit as we trust in and prioritize God’s leading in our lives, rather than living by the spirit of the world. The spirit of the world (vs. 12) is a spirit alienated from God. This is the sinful nature (see Romans 8:6-7) which is opposed to God and does not walk in the way of wisdom. Words taught by the Spirit (vs. 13) are found in the Bible and particularly in the teachings of Jesus. To follow the Holy Spirit’s lead we should regularly read and think about how to apply to our lives the teachings of the Bible.

1. What temptation or decision are you wrestling with where you need God’s wisdom?**What next step can you take from today’s study to help you to seek God’s wisdom in this area?**

**PRAYER**

Consider praying this prayer out loud together as a group, or use this as a guide in your time with God this week:

“Father God, I want to live by your wisdom. I want to honour You and bring glory to Your Name. I confess that I don’t always know how to do that, so today I ask for your wisdom. I know that genuine respect for You is the beginning of wisdom, so teach me humility as I pray. Help me to remember that You are God and I am not. Help me to learn what it means to fear You – to worship You and honour You, to remember that I will stand before You one day to give an account to You for the way I’ve lived. May this awareness serve as a strong foundation for me to seek your wisdom, to trust You and obey your lead in my life. I know that You are large and in charge of my life. You are in control. Help me to view my life from your perspective, to live my life in light of eternity. As You show me who You are, please grant me your wisdom to bring glory to your Name as I follow your Son, the Lord Jesus. Lord, thank You for your wisdom. I ask all of these things in the Name of your Son, Jesus. Amen. “

For more examples of prayers for wisdom, check out this resource: <https://www.biblestudytools.com/bible-study/topical-studies/powerful-prayers-for-wisdom.html>