

HEAD HEART HANDS

Leader Guide Week 3

Leader Tips

- Be aware that confusion about grace and works is common, and be prepared to follow up on misconceptions. This discussion may be a great springboard for future Bible studies on grace and works.
- Some groups may begin the discussion of what it would look like to transition to a "Barnabus" type group...one that only meets monthly to support members as they disciple others. This is not a direction that all groups need to take...but just an idea.

SPIRITUAL PATHOLOGIES & LINKING ARMS



What is a SPIRITUAL PATHOLOGY?

Example 1:

CHEAPENED GRACE MINDSET

- Wanting grace and forgiveness without working towards repentance.
- Embracing a grace that saves me from but never seeking to know what I am saved to.
- Forgetting that grace comes from the cross and the sacrifice of Jesus. True grace is costly.

Example 2:

WORKS GROWTH MINDSET

- Thinking that my works (alone) will make me into a growing disciple.
- Believing that I can be more righteous by doing more...reading more, praying more, serving more. (Lie: I can control my Christian greatness.)
- Not realizing that though I may look like a "good" Christian on the outside, that I have fallen into a trap of legalism...judging myself and others by impossible standards.

1. What do the following scriptures say about grace and works?

Ephesians 2:8-9

- *Saved by grace, not saved by works, created to do good works that God prepares for us*

Romans 3:19-25

- *We all sin...no one can measure up to the law. No one is righteous in God's sight apart from Jesus.*
- *The law helps us see our sin.*
- *We are justified by grace through the redemption that comes from Jesus.*
- *God sacrificed Jesus to justify us.*

2 Corinthians 6:1

- *Do not receive the grace of God in vain.*

Isaiah 53:3-5

- *Jesus was despised, rejected, filled with sorrow, grief. He bears our griefs, carries our sorrows. He was pierced, crushed and chastised for our sins. We are healed by his wounds.*

James 2:14-26

- *Faith without works is dead. We show our faith by our works. Our faith and actions work together.*

Philippians 2:12-13

- *We are to work even as God is working in us to act to fulfill his purpose.*

2. How do we spot a **CHEAP GRACE** mindset in our lives?

- *Not caring about slipping into sinful patterns*
- *Quick to justify sin, quick to receive forgiveness, slow to repent/turn from sin*
- *More concerned with a fulfilling life than seeking righteousness*
- *Compare our sin to "worse" sins, accepting where we are*
- *Belief that some sins (addictions) are out of our control to work on*

3. How do we spot a **WORKS GROWTH** mindset in our lives?

- *Keeping a mental religious checklist on what makes a "good" Christian*
- *Too busy to cultivate real, meaningful relationships*
- *Overcommitted in church activities*
- *An increase in ministry/serving without an increase in closeness to God*
- *Self-esteem dependent on ministry*
- *Socially acceptable on the outside, but no faith to sustain in hard times*

4. What verses in Psalm 51 might help prevent us from slipping into either cheap grace or work growth mindsets?

- *Cheap grace – v. 3-4 "For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me. Against you, you only, have I sinned..." v. 17 "...a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise."*
- *Works growth – v. 16 "You do not delight in sacrifice...you do not take pleasure in burnt offerings."*

5. How can staying committed to a one-on-one discipleship relationship or a discipleship group (*Linking Arms*) help keep us healthy spiritually?

6. What would be the benefits of a once a month "Barnabus" group whose function is to support each other (*Linking Arms*) as members spend time the rest of the month discipling others?

This type of group is going to look different for everyone. It may just be one or two other people who you fish with, have coffee with, or take a walk with. They are people who do not replace the groups you are in, the areas in which you serve, or the people that you disciple but instead act as a cheerleader to lift you up, a triage unit to patch you up, and sometimes as a cattle prod to wake you up. All designed to move you further along in your service to Christ and discipleship of others.

7. What does the Barrel of Monkeys game have to do with healthy discipleship?

Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor: If either of them falls down, one can help the other up. But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up. Ecclesiastes 4:9,10

8. Read the following Case Studies and discuss how the Head Heart Hand model may help not only identify spiritual pathologies, but give insight into strategies for growth.

Case Studies-

Eric is a 37-year-old having significant issues with pornography and disrespecting his wife, and he has just joined your D-group. These facts only came out when your group met separately as men and women.

Eric:

"I know God doesn't want me to do these things because he wants me to have a better life."

"I just don't know why He doesn't take this addiction away from me."

"I have been reading *Your Best Life Now* to find out how to break out of this struggle."

How might HHH help Eric identify problems and strategies for growth?

HEAD:

Discussion points:

- *Repentance means, "to change the mind." When you change your mind, you change your actions. What does God say about pornography and the way to treat a wife? Do you agree with him?*
- *Repentance comes out of gratitude for what Jesus has done for us.... "costly grace." Does understanding Jesus' deep sacrificial love for you help to motivate you to love your wife well?*

Strategies:

- *Offer to do studies on repentance and grace.*
- *Look up Scriptures together on sexual purity and how a husband is to treat a wife.*
- *Suggest replacing self-help books with time in the Word to renew the mind.*

HEART:

Discussion Points:

- *Although Eric may put filters on his computer, give passwords to his wife, or be in accountability groups in order to try and control his sin, victory is when he no longer wants to engage in this sin.*
- *Further victory would be when he develops a hate of the sin and mourns over its existence in his life and in the lives of others.*
- *This change will take time... usually a long time and it will not likely appear one day in a nice, neat package; but will manifest itself in tiny changes over time. This change is the work of the Holy spirit creating a new spirit within Eric as the old spirit is put to death. Eric will have to accept the work of the Holy Spirit and not hang on to what he currently loves so much (yes, despite what he*



says to others or himself, at the beginning he loves his sin just as much as the rich young ruler loved his riches and would not die to possessing them).

HANDS:

Discussion Points:

- *Abstaining from porn (any sinful struggle) should be seen as a "living sacrifice." (See Romans 12:1-2).*
- *If abstaining is based on whether or not we feel like we can, we will almost always fail.*
- *His behavior has to have a good connection to his faith. Faith leads to obedience and obedience to faith. If one has faith in the wrong kind of grace (cheap grace) then the faith will be powerless. (Here we have an obvious overlap between HEAD and HANDS).*

Strategies:

- *Start the discipline of abiding with Christ in the Word and in prayer.*
- *Ask the Holy Spirit for help in overcoming sin.*
- *Find an accountability partner who helps with practical things like computer filters, finding counseling, etc., but also with developing a close relationship with Jesus.*

Erica is a 37-year-old mother of two and works part-time. She is in your D-group and is also in a weekly women's Bible study. Erica serves in the children's ministry 3-4 times/month and spends time doing at least two Bible studies on her own. She believes in "discipleship." In fact, she will frequently have lunch with other ladies of the church she knows needs discipling and tells them what she has learned from her studies.

Erica struggles with gossip, though she doesn't see it as an issue. Erica usually knows all about any church or community issues, and she will share the news as prayer requests.

How might HHH help Erica identify problems and strategies for growth?

HEAD:

Discussion Points:

- *Erica needs to understand the place of works in the realm of a disciple. One might be concerned that Erica believes her works are evidence of a healthy Christian life; yet she struggles with sin.*
- *Are Erica's actions motivated by a false understanding of what makes a "good Christian" or is she truly hungry to learn and understand God's Word?*
- *Is Erica struggling with a Works-Growth mindset?*

Strategies:

- *Suggest group studies in the areas of works, gossip/tongue.*
- *Occasionally suggest that prayer requests in group be focused on personal goals/struggles.*

HEART:

Discussion Points:

- *The Holy Spirit will have claimed a greater portion of Erica's HEART when she no longer wants to gossip and when she no longer feels the need to gossip.*
- *Transformation will happen when Erica allows the Holy Spirit to convict and encourage her to grow because of the time she is spending in the Word.*

HANDS:

Discussion Points:

- *The HANDS sphere has an obvious overlap with the HEART sphere.*

Strategies:

- *Suggest focusing on just one Bible Study and then taking the time to take to heart/live out/do what has been studied.*
- *As a group activity, have members make a list of everything they do in a week, along with the motivation behind their activities. Are our deeds aligned with God's will?*
- *Promote a study that stresses the importance of both discipling others AND being disciplined by others. There is no such thing as a Christian who is "good enough" and who doesn't need help to grow out of her own struggles.*

Summary of these Two Case Studies

The HEAD HEART HANDS assessments for these two case studies are similar because in both of them the ultimate question is how does one deal with lingering sin. However, the ultimate goal is not just ridding oneself from sin but to be an *image bearer* for God. So, beyond the sin issues we may have immediately, we are to always be looking for further knowledge (HEAD) and intimacy with Jesus and the Holy Spirit, which will require Bible study, prayer, and other spiritual disciplines (HANDS). This is so we can properly represent—*bear the image of*—God in the world with which we have contact (HANDS). The Holy Spirit then, has fertile ground for which to establish Himself as the one who controls our lives and in return instills in us the proper desires as a Jesus-centered disciple (HEART).

Prayer Time Focus

- That God would protect you from spiritual pathologies or wrong mindsets.
- That your group would be a safe place to sharpen one another, with grace and truth.