

SOUL

PRESCRIPTION

Experience True Healing and Freedom



Leader's Guide

Sheryl Moon

SOUL PRESCRIPTION

Leader's Guide

By Sheryl Moon

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This Leader's Guide is designed for adult Sunday School classes and church home group programs that use the *Soul Prescription* book by Dr. Bill Bright and Dr. Henry Brandt.

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Welcome Leaders!

Intro

You are about to embark on a journey! An exciting journey, but one that none-the-less may present difficult passages and dangerous crossings. *Soul Prescription* is a book designed to help God's children deal with the crucial matter of sin and holiness. It is definitely a freeing process, but one that can seem hard and at times insurmountable. Sin is not a very popular concept these days, but in *Soul Prescription* Dr. Bill Bright and Dr. Henry Brandt boldly present time-tested, biblically based principles for repenting of sin and going on with life in freedom and holiness. It is a tough process and one that takes courage, strength, and the Holy Spirit's power. As the leader of your group, you are in the incredible position of helping people to study these truths and apply them to their own lives. As you meet together, each person in your group will be presented with a prescription capable of healing the harm that sin has caused in their lives.

It is extremely important that you take a few minutes to read through the next few sections of this Introduction. Not only will you find options on how to plan the time for each session, there are also important instructions on how to maximize the time you have each time you gather with your group.

Our prayer is that God will use this material to powerfully bless you and your group members as you apply God's truth to your lives!

How This Material is Organized

The course is divided into 18 Sessions – and those 18 sessions are grouped into two parts.

Part 1 (Chapters 1-8) outlines “The Healing Process.” As Dr. Bright and Dr. Brandt write in chapter 1:

This book is not for people who want to dodge their sin problem or merely cover it up or make it better but not get rid of it. It is for people who are sick and tired of their sin problem and are filled with a drive to get rid of it once and for all. They are ready, at last, to say, “I can’t do this on my own. I need God’s help to deal with my sin.” This approach requires courage and faith, but it has the virtue of dealing with the real problem. We have to deal with our sin head on.

Part 1 will help people to acknowledge and own their sin – and will present a concrete way of dealing with it.

Part 2 (Chapters 9-18) presents “The Sin Families.” The concept is that sins tend to gather in “families” – groups of related sins, each with its own “parent” sin. Each chapter will focus on a particular family of sins and will include material that will help you understand that particular set of sins from a biblical perspective as well as outline the application process called “Soul Prescription.”

Session Sections

Each Session contains the following sections:

Begin Session

- *Opening Remarks*
- *Announcements*
- *Opening Prayer*

Review of Days 1 – 3

Each Day incorporates the following elements (the total amount of time you have will determine how much of this material you are able to include each time you meet– see “Format” below):

Overview: The Overview provides a summary of what was covered in the reading provided in the book. You may find it helpful to read it out loud to the class or simply summarize it in your own words. This “review” will help bring back to everyone’s mind what they are about to discuss and will give focus to the discussion.

Points to Emphasize: In addition to the Overview, this section highlights the specific points that should be reiterated in this section. We have listed one or more for each day. You can emphasize these points by reading them verbatim or simply bringing the group’s attention to them. For example, you might say, “On the bottom of page 15, Dr. Bright and Dr. Brandt remind us that God loves us and does not want us to suffer the harm we bring on ourselves through our sin. He eagerly helps those persons who want to stop sinning.”

Questions to Discuss: There are always two questions (or some type of reflection) included to help your group make the transition from the information presented in the book to personal sharing. These questions tend to be less personal in nature, focusing more on the topic than on personal application. You may choose to use these, or add your own as you desire.

Share: This is the “facilitation” part of the class! It is important to let members of the group share their thoughts and ideas. For each day, ask 1 or 2 people to share their thoughts concerning what they’ve been reading and applying to their life.

Conclude Session

- *Wrap-Up*
Each time the group meets you should summarize what you have discussed throughout your time together.
- *Hand Out the Before Class Preparation Worksheet for the next session*
- *Closing Prayer / Prayer Partners*

Format

The great part of this material is that it is essentially review, discussion, and sharing.

Every time you meet, each person in your group should have completed the “Before Class Preparation Worksheet.” Hand the sheet for the next session out each time you meet. Be sure to hand out the first session worksheet prior to your first session.

For every session, you can use as little or much time as you have. However, make sure you get through the entire session! This material will best be facilitated in a 45–90 minute time-frame. Obviously, more time available provides more time for discussion and sharing.

Use your time wisely and watch your time carefully! In each session, along the left-hand side of the page, you’ll find a line with the word “START” by the major sections. This is provided as a tool for you – before the class begins you should write in the time of when you should be starting that section.

If you have one hour for your group to meet, you know about how many minutes you need for the “Begin Session” activities, and the “Conclude Session” activities. Let’s use as an example 3 minutes for each one of those sections of your time – you have 54 minutes left for the other 3 sections of review, questions, and sharing: approximately 18 minutes for each Day’s review. If your session begins at 10 a.m., you should be at Review Day 1 at 10:03 a.m., Review of Day 2 at 10:21 a.m., etc. This planning will serve as a check point to help you get through the entire session. You may think this is simply a “given,” but it might surprise you to know how many groups often do not complete their lessons – or end up rushing through the last few questions, simply because they did not monitor their time carefully.

Failure to keep track of your time will be frustrating for members who had something really important to share on Day 3, but they were unable to contribute to the discussion because you ran out of class time. It is your job as the leader to keep the group moving through the session and at the same time be sensitive to a member who is sharing something important. Keep track of the time and flex within days as necessary to get all the way to the end.

Typographical Elements

In addition to the “START” lines included for each section, you will also find along the left-hand side of the page the book page numbers referenced. The

numbers also include a letter – “T”, “M”, or “B” – signifying “Top,” “Middle,” or “Bottom.” This is for your ease in referring back to the book material.

Information is included in 2 different fonts:

The regular font is material that you can read verbatim to your group.

The italicized font indicates instructions for you as the leader.

Tips for Leading Group Discussion

Emphasize from the very beginning that what is shared in the group, stays in the group. Trust is an important component of small group sharing. Nothing will shut your group down quicker than group members feeling as though what they share might be shared with others outside of the group or used against them.

If you have more than 12 members in your group, you should divide into smaller groups of 6-8 members. This will allow for more individual sharing and can help shy individuals from being intimidated by the larger number of faces in the group. Assign a leader to facilitate discussion for each small group.

Getting Into Groups: If you need to get into smaller groups, the configuration of your groups can change each time you meet. Encourage couples to split up in order to achieve better group diversion. Use a different way of assigning groups each time you meet so that members don't "figure out" what you are doing and "work" the system to be with those they are most comfortable with. Here are a couple of ideas for getting people into groups each time:

- Have group members pick a slip of paper out of a basket with a color on it – group all colors together OR one of each color in each group
- Pick a slip of paper with a number on it – group all numbers together, or all even-odd numbers, or consecutive numbers (1-6, 7-12, etc.)
- Pick a slip of paper with different fruits of the Spirit as found in Galatians 5:22-23 (love, joy, peace, etc.)
- Be creative and come up with a unique idea or even use a tried and true method – the important thing is to help people get into a group!

Ask questions with interest and warmth. Listen carefully to individual answers. Keep in mind that no answer is insignificant; affirm each person's participation.

Be sensitive to who is doing the talking in your group. Is one person monopolizing the time? Is another person talking about irrelevant information to the topic at hand? Is someone only listening and never offering a thought or idea? As tactfully as you know how, keep the discussion on track and draw out everyone's ideas. This can be very difficult! Pray for wisdom and courage to keep the group focused and sensitive to all members.

Each time we meet we will discuss one chapter of the book. Each chapter has been divided into 5 Daily Sections: 3 days of reading, 1 day of reflection, and 1 day for a short prayer.

As you read, you may find it helpful to use a highlighter to mark ideas and principles that stand out for you. This will make it easier for you to go back and list the ideas, scriptures, and applications you want to discuss when the group meets.

Do not wait until the end of the week to work through all of the days at once! You will not benefit throughout your week with the truth that you are learning, and you will miss out on the opportunity to apply it each day.

Prayer Partners

Each session ends with “Prayer / Prayer Partners.” You may choose as the leader to simply offer a prayer at the end of each session or can ask your group members to pair up as partners for the duration of the course.

Having a Prayer Partner can be a helpful part of the process of growing. It is often helpful for Prayer Partners to stay the same throughout the entire course. If this is possible, Prayer Partners should agree to pray for each other throughout each week and touch base each time you meet for updates.

Allow group members to choose a Prayer Partner. Encourage them to pray for:

- Insight into God’s Word
- Honesty in answering the questions
- God’s revelation of the needed change in your partner’s life
- Obedience to put into action what God reveals
- Discipline and time to complete the homework daily

Before Session 1

Before Session 1

Make sure each person has a copy of *Soul Prescription*.

Copy and distribute to all group members the *Before Class Preparation Worksheet Explanation* and the *Before Class Preparation Worksheet for Unit 1* – “The Heart of the Problem.”

Before Class Preparation Worksheet Explanation

Soul Prescription is a book designed to help you deal with the crucial matter of sin and holiness. It is definitely a freeing process, but one that can seem hard and at times insurmountable. Sin is not a very popular concept these days, but in *Soul Prescription* Dr. Bill Bright and Dr. Henry Brandt boldly present time-tested, biblically based principles for repenting of sin and going on with life in freedom and holiness. It is a tough process and one that takes courage, strength, and the Holy Spirit's power to persevere. As we meet together to learn about this process and explore God's healing, it is important that you take time each week to read through one chapter in the book *Soul Prescription* as well as take some time to reflect on how the principles apply to your own life.

The course is divided into 18 Sessions – and those 18 sessions are grouped into two parts.

Part 1 (chapters 1-8) outlines “The Healing Process.” As Dr. Bright and Dr. Brandt write in chapter 1:

This book is not for people who want to dodge their sin problem or merely cover it up or make it better but not get rid of it. It is for people who are sick and tired of their sin problem and are filled with a drive to get rid of it once and for all. They are ready, at last, to say, “I can't do this on my own. I need God's help to deal with my sin.” This approach requires courage and faith, but it has the virtue of dealing with the real problem. We have to deal with our sin head on.

Part 1 will help each one of us to acknowledge and own our sin – and will present a concrete way of dealing with it! Part 2 (chapters 9-18) presents “The Sin Families.” more of which we will learn about in chapter 8.

Each time we meet we will discuss one chapter of the book. Each chapter has been divided into 5 Daily Sections: 3 days of reading, 1 day of reflection, and 1 day for a short prayer.

As you read, you may find it helpful to use a highlighter to mark ideas and principles that stand out for you. This will make it easier for you to go back and list the ideas, scriptures, and applications you want to discuss when the group meets.

Do not wait until the end of the week to work through all of the days at once! You will not benefit throughout your week with the truth that you are learning, and you will miss out on the opportunity to apply it each day.

The Heart of the Problem

Before Class Preparation Worksheet

Unit 1

Day 1: Read pages 1–6: Introductory Stories, Feeling Miserable?, The Blame Game

Choose one idea that you most want to remember:

From the scriptures included, which verse or phrase is most meaningful to you?

List one practical application you can make to your own life from this section of reading:

Day 2: Read pages 6-8: Coping or Cure?

Choose one idea that you most want to remember:

From the scriptures included, which verse or phrase is most meaningful to you?

List one practical application you can make to your own life from this section of reading:

Day 3: Read pages 8-12: The Real Problem You Face, The Answer

Choose one idea that you most want to remember:

From the scriptures included, which verse or phrase is most meaningful to you?

List one practical application you can make to your own life from this section of reading:

Day 4: On the back of this page, answer the “Life Reflection” questions on page 12.

Day 5: On the back of this page, write a short prayer to help you apply this to your life.

The Heart of the Problem

Unit 1

START: _____

Begin Session

Opening Remarks

Announcements

Opening Prayer

START: _____

Review Day 1

Pages 1-6: ■ Introductory Stories

■ Feeling Miserable?

■ The Blame Game

Overview:

Dr. Bright and Dr. Brandt begin this book by giving us some examples of people with “sin habits.” They point out that individuals often find themselves entrenched in some type of sin and want desperately to be free. The good news is that freedom is possible – but only through God.

Points to Emphasize:

page 3-M

➤ Hebrews 4:12 — “For the word of God is alive and powerful. It is sharper than the sharpest two-edged sword, cutting between soul and spirit, between joint and marrow. It exposes our innermost thoughts and desires.”

page 3-B

➤ God loves us and does not want us to suffer the harm we bring on ourselves through our sin. He eagerly helps those persons who want to stop sinning.

page 5-T

➤ Healing begins simply by knowing that God understands our predicament.

page 6-T

➤ We do not mean to make light of the hardships people endure – not in the least On the other hand, we do mean to point out the ways that people tend to shift some, if not all, of the blame for their actions away from themselves.

Questions to Discuss:

1. As we begin our study of this topic, why is it often easy for people to place the blame on someone or something other than themselves?
2. What is your reaction to the Hebrews 4:12 passage (written above)?

Share:

Have 1 or 2 people share a meaningful insight, scripture, or application from their personal study.

START: _____

Review Day 2

Pages 6-8: ■ Coping or Cure?

Overview:

This section addresses the true desires that are in our heart: Do we want to merely find a way to cope with our sin or do we really want to be cured from it? There are many ways to “cope” and make life work for us, but Dr. Bright and Dr. Brandt are interested in helping us to truly be transformed.

Points to Emphasize:

page 7-T

➤ We are not interested in helping you live with your problem – we want you to be fundamentally transformed. And a cure like this is possible only if we get to the heart of the problem.

page 8-T

➤ Sin really is the heart of the problem, because in the end each of us is responsible for our own behavior. Regardless of the influences that may be acting upon us, sin is an act of the will. We choose to do what we know is wrong.

page 8-M

➤ ... it is never safe to try to live with a sin problem. Sin is like a cancer it grows in seriousness over time.

page 8-B

➤ This book is not for people who want to dodge their sin problem or merely cover it up or make it better but not get rid of it. It is for people who are sick and tired of their sin problems and are filled with a drive to get rid of it once and for all. They are ready, at last, to say, “I can’t do this on my own. I need God’s help to deal with the real problem.”

Questions to Discuss:

1. What are some ways you have seen people “cope” with their sin?
(Possible answers: Drugs, alcohol, immersion in work, kids activities, relationship. Sometimes activities can be good in themselves, but are helping us escape from really facing our sin)
2. Are there some ways that a “cure” from sin is frightening?

Share:

Have 1 or 2 people share a meaningful insight, scripture, or application from their personal study.

START: _____

Review Day 3

- Pages 8-12: ■ The Real Problem You Face
■ The Answer

Overview:

Dr. Bright and Dr. Brandt point out in this section that the real problem we face is a bent toward sin ... and that bent toward sin is only changed through a relationship with Jesus Christ. We must admit that we have sin in our lives and then bring that sin to Jesus.

Points to Emphasize:

- page 9-T ➤ Why is the world so messed up? ... It is all because at the beginning of human history a change came over our race that marked us with sin.
- page 9-B ➤ Human nature after Adam and Eve includes a bent toward wickedness that we can never straighten out on our own.
- page 10-M ➤ Once we are believers in Jesus Christ, God does a remarkable thing. He accepts Jesus Christ's righteousness as our righteousness. "We are made right with God by placing our faith in Jesus Christ" (Romans 3:33).
- page 9-B to 10-T ➤ Romans 8:2 – "The power of the life-giving Spirit has freed you from the power of sin."
- page 11-M ➤ Repenting and turning to God for help are first steps toward the freedom from sin that we so desperately desire. But as we have said, that requires facing up to the fact that sin is at the heart of our problem. We have to deal with our sin head on.

Questions to Discuss:

1. In what ways does the message presented in this chapter go against what our society believes?
2. Was anything in this chapter difficult for you to embrace? Why or why not?

Share:

Have 1 or 2 people share a meaningful insight, scripture, or application from their personal study.

START: _____

Conclude Session

Wrap-Up

Hand out the Before Class Preparation Worksheet for Unit 2

Closing Prayer

END: _____

The Secret to Lasting Health

Before Class Preparation Worksheet

Unit 2

Day 1: Read pages 13-18: Introduction, Dressed for Godliness, Fruitful for God

Choose one idea that you most want to remember:

From the scriptures included, which verse or phrase is most meaningful to you?

List one practical application you can make to your own life from this section of reading.:

Day 2: Read pages 18-21: Filled with Power, Spiritual Breathing

Spiritual Breathing: “Exhaling” _____ through _____.
“Inhaling” _____ through filling
by the _____.

Choose one idea that you most want to remember:

From the scriptures included, which verse or phrase is most meaningful to you?

List one practical application you can make to your own life from this section of reading:

Day 3: Read pages 21-24: Quest for Christlikeness, Love: The Main Virtue, The Soul Prescription

5 Steps to Breaking a Sinful Habit:

1. _____ a correct view of _____.
2. _____ your false _____.
3. _____ of your _____.
4. _____ against _____.
5. _____.

Choose one idea that you most want to remember:

From the scriptures included, which verse or phrase is most meaningful to you?

List one practical application you can make to your own life from this section of reading:

Day 4: On the back of this page, answer the “Life Reflection” questions on page 24.

Day 5: On the back of this page, write a short prayer to help you apply this to your life.

The Secret to Lasting Health

Unit 2

START: _____

Begin Session

Opening Remarks

Announcements

Opening Prayer

START: _____

Review Day 1

Pages 13-18: ■ Introduction

■ Dressed for Godliness

■ Fruitful for God

Overview:

As Chapter 2 begins, Dr. Bright and Dr. Brandt emphasize the need to desire lasting change. It is a two-step process: Getting rid of the sin, and being filled with God's Holy Spirit. This is accomplished by identifying your sin and asking God for His help in defeating the sin once for all, and seeking the Spirit's transforming power to establish new and better choices.

Points to Emphasize:

page 13-M

➤ You not only need to be cleansed of your sin, but at the same time you need to be filled with holiness.

page 14-15

➤ Colossians 3:5-15

page 15-B to 16-T

➤ As we all know, old clothes can sometimes be the most comfortable. And in the same way, our old habits of sin can seem easiest for us to wear. The problem is that they are morally shabby and are inappropriate attire for one who wants to enter the presence of the King. We need to judge our sin by the objective standard of Scripture, not by the temporary pleasure or comfort it might give us.

page 17-B

➤ As you seek to substitute holiness for the sinful choices in your life, remember that the effort is a cooperative endeavor between you and God. Of course, you have your own part to play – you have to decide to act in accordance with God's holy commands and then follow through. But even more importantly, the Holy Spirit is at the same time working in you to help you stop doing what is wrong and start doing what is

right.

Questions to Discuss:

1. Why are “resolutions” to stop sinning often ineffective?
2. What past discussions, thoughts, or experiences have you had with the Holy Spirit?

Share:

Have 1 or 2 people share a meaningful insight, scripture, or application from their personal study.

START: _____

Review Day 2

- Pages 18-21: ■ Filled with Power
■ Spiritual Breathing

Overview:

As we begin the next section of this chapter, there is an emphasis on God’s power and how to experience it. Having the Holy Spirit active in our lives is what gives us the power to accomplish great things for God. A key concept is introduced here also, “Spiritual Breathing” – exhaling our guilt and inhaling God’s grace. This is a way for us to experience God’s faithfulness.

Points to Emphasize:

page 19-T

- Ephesians 3:16 – “I pray that from His [the Father’s] glorious, unlimited resources He will empower you with inner strength through His Spirit.”

page 20-M

- Spiritual Breathing is “exhaling” guilt through confession and “inhaling” grace through filling by the Holy Spirit.

page 20-B

- The key to spiritual breathing is stopping a sin as soon as we are convicted of it. Otherwise, we will just reinforce a sin habit. Rather than letting the sin go on, we bring it before God and ask His forgiveness.

Questions to Discuss:

1. Have you ever thought about being filled with God’s power? What is your initial reaction to this concept?
2. Spiritual breathing is a key concept for Dr. Bright – he mentions it in several of his books. How might this spiritual exercise make a difference in you life?

Share:

Have 1 or 2 people share a meaningful insight, scripture, or application from their personal study.

START: _____

Review Day 3

- Pages 21-24: ■ Quest for Christlikeness
■ Love: The Main Virtue
■ Soul Prescription

Overview:

God wants us to reflect His image. It is His will that we conform ourselves to Christ. This is accomplished with the help of the Holy Spirit. The concept of love is discussed as the overall virtue – this will be explained in more detail later in the book. The authors make the point that your life will not be fully healed until you exhibit Christlike love for all. This is obtained by working through “The Soul Prescription” – five steps to breaking a sinful habit. By working through this process, we can put an end to our sin habits.

Points to Emphasize:

- page 21-B ➤ This is what God hopes to see in us as He purifies us of sin: an image of Himself.
- page 22-T ➤ Every virtue is important, but none other is so important as love. To Jesus, love for God and love for people represented the sum of all obedience.
- page 23-T ➤ Your life will not be fully healed until you exhibit Christlike love for all.
- page 24-M ➤ Five Steps to Breaking a Sinful Habit
 1. Adopt a correct view of God.
 2. Revise your false beliefs.
 3. Repent of your sin.
 4. Defend against spiritual attacks.
 5. Flee temptation.

Questions to Discuss:

1. The first subtitle for this section is “Quest for Christlikeness.” What does the word “quest” imply?
(In defining “quest,” Webster uses the words “investigation,” “seeking,” “pursuit,” and “search.”)
2. The “Five Steps to breaking a Sinful Habit” are presented in this chapter. At first glance, which one seems most difficult?

Share:

Have 1 or 2 people share a meaningful insight, scripture, or application from their personal study.

START: _____

Conclude Session

Wrap-Up

Hand out the Before Class Preparation Worksheet for Unit 3

Closing Prayer

END: _____

Knowing God

Before Class Preparation Worksheet

Unit 3

Day 1: Read pages 27-32: Introduction, God's Self-Portrait, The Purification Process

Choose one idea that you most want to remember:

From the scriptures included, which verse or phrase is most meaningful to you?

List one practical application you can make to your own life from this section of reading:

Day 2: Read pages 32-35: Who God Is, How God Acts Toward Us

The attributes of God are primary qualities or characteristics belonging to Him. These attributes are:

1. *God is* _____

7. *God is* _____

2. *God is* _____

8. *God is* _____

3. *God is* _____

9. *God is* _____

4. *God is* _____

10. *God is* _____

5. *God is* _____

11. *God is* _____

6. *God is* _____

12. *God is* _____

Choose one idea that you most want to remember:

From the scriptures included, which verse or phrase is most meaningful to you?

List one practical application you can make to your own life from this section of reading:

Day 3: Read pages 35-37: God and Holiness

Choose one idea that you most want to remember:

List one practical application you can make to your own life from this section of reading.

Day 4: On the back of this page, answer the "Life Reflection" questions on page 37.

Day 5: On the back of this page, write a short prayer to help you apply this to your life.

Knowing God

Unit 3

START: _____

Begin Session

Opening Remarks

Announcements

Opening Prayer

START: _____

Review Day 1

- Pages 27-32:
- Introduction
 - God's Self-Portrait
 - The Purification Process

Overview:

(Opening Paragraph ...) If we want to deal with our sin problems and be transformed, we should first look at what we are doing and then develop strategies for changing our behavior, right? Wrong. The first step should be to start at the other end – not with ourselves but with God. That is why step one in breaking a sinful habit is to adopt a correct view of God. The more fully we understand the nature of God, the better we will understand how we should live in this world. The best source for understanding God better is the Bible.

Points To Emphasize:

page 28-T

- Our convictions influence our behavior. For this reason, it is important that we have the right convictions in the first place.

page 29-M

- God is beyond our ability to fully comprehend Him.

page 30-T

- The Bible is our most comprehensive guide to the nature of God ... If we will take the time to study what Scripture says, we can arrive at a picture of God that certainly is not complete but that is more than adequate for our needs.

page 31-M

- There is a good chance that your image of God has been distorted in some significant ways with additions from worldly sources. So prepare to go through a purification process as you filter out mistaken notions about God that you have acquired.

page 32-T

- You will benefit from knowing more about both who God is and how

He acts toward you. Transformation of your hearts, soul, and will occurs as you choose to discover and believe the truth about God.

Questions to Discuss:

1. What has influenced your concept of God?
2. What role has the Bible played in your life?

Share:

Have 1 or 2 people share a meaningful insight, scripture, or application from their personal study.

START: _____

Review Day 2

- Pages 32-35: ■ Who God Is
■ How God Acts Toward Us

Overview:

The attributes of God are primary qualities or characteristics belonging to Him. These attributes are:

- ◆ God is all-powerful
- ◆ God is ever-present
- ◆ God is all-knowing
- ◆ God is sovereign
- ◆ God is holy
- ◆ God is truthful
- ◆ God is righteous
- ◆ God is just
- ◆ God is loving
- ◆ God is merciful
- ◆ God is faithful
- ◆ God is unchanging

Points To Emphasize:

page 34-M

- Learning about the nature and attributes of God, as revealed by the Bible, is far from being a mere academic exercise. We discover in the process a God who cares about us, who is intimately involved in our lives, and who wants to help us heal from our sin habits.

page 35-B

- As you get to know Him [God] more fully, He will begin to change your thoughts and feelings in ways that will make you more ready to part with your habitual sin and to embrace holiness.

Questions to Discuss:

1. As you read through the attributes of God, which one or two impressed you most? Which one had you not considered before?
2. How do you think an understanding and application of these attributes to your life could change your outlook on your life situations? How might a new understanding of God actually change your circumstances?

Share:

Have 1 or 2 people share a meaningful insight, scripture, or application from their personal study.

START: _____

Review Day 3

Pages 35-37: ■ God and Holiness

Overview:

This section begins with the story of a military officer addicted to painkillers. His journey to healing included a look at his understanding of God. A revolution in our view of God can start a revolution in our behavior.

page 37-T

Points To Emphasize:

- How good it is to know God as He really is! A revolution in our view of God can start a revolution in our behavior, making us more holy like the holy God.

Questions to Discuss:

1. How does a distorted view of God affect our behavior?
2. How do we obtain a right view of God? What will it take for you to have a better understanding of who God is (be specific)?

Share:

Have 1 or 2 people share a meaningful insight, scripture, or application from their personal study.

START: _____

Conclude Session

Wrap-Up

Hand out the Before Class Preparation Worksheet for Unit 4

Closing Prayer

END: _____

Embracing Truth

Before Class Preparation Worksheet

Unit 4

Day 1: Read pages 39-43: Introduction, How True is Truth?, A Strategy that Works

Choose one idea that you most want to remember.

From the scriptures included, which verse or phrase is most meaningful to you?

List one practical application you can make to your own life from this section of reading.

Day 2: Read pages 43-48: What Do You Believe about Yourself?, What Do You Believe about Others?, What Do you Believe about How Life Works?

Choose one idea that you most want to remember.

From the scriptures included, which verse or phrase is most meaningful to you?

List one practical application you can make to your own life from this section of reading.

Day 3: Read pages 48-50: Free to See the Truth

Choose one idea that you most want to remember.

From the scriptures included, which verse or phrase is most meaningful to you?

List one practical application you can make to your own life from this section of reading.

Day 4: On the back of this page, answer the “Life Reflection” questions on page 50.

Day 5: On the back of this page, write a short prayer to help you apply this to your life.

Embracing Truth

Unit 4

START: _____

Begin Session

Opening Remarks

Announcements

Opening Prayer

START: _____

Review Day 1

- Pages 39-43:
- Introduction
 - How True is Truth?
 - A Strategy That Works

Overview:

In the beginning of this chapter Dr. Bright and Dr. Brandt lay the foundation for the concept that each one of us may have false convictions about ourselves, about others, and about life in general. These false convictions can contribute in a major way to our sin problem. We must commit our selves to embracing real truth – specifically the truth as it is presented in the Bible.

Points To Emphasize:

- page 40-T ➤ The truth. It is sometimes hard to discover and even harder to accept.
- page 41-T ➤ We have to accept that there is such a thing as absolute truth ... this is truth that is true for all people at all times and in all places.
- page 42-T ➤ We believers have God's personal guidance in knowing what is true. The primary way the Holy Spirit guides us into truth is by opening our minds and hearts to the truth that God has inscribed in His Word, the Bible.
- page 42-B ➤ We can search the Word, not only to test what others are saying, but also to check up on what we ourselves think and feel about things.

Questions to Discuss:

1. What is your reaction to the authors' convictions about truth?
(Don't be afraid to let people express disagreement.)
2. Have you ever searched the Bible for an answer to some situation or circumstance in your life? What was the outcome?

Share:

Have 1 or 2 people share a meaningful insight, scripture, or application from their personal study.

START: _____

Review Day 2

- Pages 43/48: ■ What Do You Believe about Yourself?
■ What Do You Believe about Others?
■ What Do You Believe about How Life Works?

Overview:

This section discusses how truth affects our perceptions about ourselves, about others, and about how life works.

Points To Emphasize:

- page 44-T ➤ We need to develop a scripturally based view of who human beings are. On the one hand, God loves us and has fashioned us in His own image. So we have great worth. On the other hand, we are finite, created beings who have been twisted by sin. Thus we have every reason for humility.
- page 44-B ➤ The image of what it means to be human, as revealed by Scripture, is more realistic than any of our false and distorted opinions of ourselves. Furthermore, it gives us a real basis for triumphing over the sin in our lives.
- page 45-T ➤ It stands to reason that if we cannot see ourselves as we are, there is no way that our perceptions of others can be accurate either. We look at others through lenses that have been distorted by our own mistaken beliefs.
- page 46-T ➤ The same truths about humanity that apply to us apply equally to others: we are made in the image of God (that's good); we have been damaged by sin (that's bad); we are enabled by God to overcome our sin (that's really good). And so we should look at people neither as objects we can use for our own desires nor as superior beings who have a right to dominate us.
- page 48-M ➤ When it comes to our convictions about life, just as with our convictions about ourselves and others, we have to make a choice; will we believe the message we receive from worldly sources, or will we believe that what the Bible says is true? If we will let the Bible form our ideas and feelings, we will find it easier to abandon our sinful ways.

Questions to Discuss:

1. How does the world attack the Biblical convictions we have about ourselves, others, and how life works?
(Many different aspects of the media, government regulation, "peer pressure," disappointment, even sometimes responsibilities.)
2. Why is it often difficult to hold on to the Biblical truths that we know concerning ourselves, others, and how life works?

Share:

Have 1 or 2 people share a meaningful insight, scripture, or application from their personal study.

START: _____

Review Day 3

Pages 48-50: ■ Free to See the Truth

Overview:

This section begins with the story of a military officer addicted to painkillers. His journey to healing included a look at his understanding of God. A revolution in our view of God can start a revolution in our behavior.

page 50-M

Points To Emphasize:

- We need to give up our false but cherished ideas and feelings about reality if we are ever to see our sin habit broken. But that means humbling ourselves. It means admitting we have been wrong.

Questions to Discuss:

1. Why is it often difficult to focus on the truth?
2. How can an understanding of truth change circumstances? How can it change our perceptions? How can it change our behavior?

Share:

Have 1 or 2 people share a meaningful insight, scripture, or application from their personal study.

START: _____

Conclude Session

Wrap-Up

Hand out the Before Class Preparation Worksheet for Unit 5

Closing Prayer

END: _____

Turning Around

Before Class Preparation Worksheet

Unit 5

Five Prayers of Repentance (See Sidebar on page 52)

1. God, I am _____.
2. God, I am _____.
3. God, _____.
4. God, _____.
5. God, _____.

Day 1: Read pages 51-54: Introduction, Prayer 1: “God, I am Wrong.”, Prayer 2: “God, I am Sorry.”

Choose one idea that you most want to remember:

From the scriptures included, which verse or phrase is most meaningful to you?

List one practical application you can make to your own life from this section of reading:

Day 2: Read pages 54-57: Prayer 3: “God, Forgive Me.”, Prayer 4: “God, Cleanse Me.”, Prayer 5: “God, Empower Me.”

Choose one idea that you most want to remember:

From the scriptures included, which verse or phrase is most meaningful to you?

List one practical application you can make to your own life from this section of reading:

Day 3: Read pages 57-59: Doing Business with God, Saying We are Sorry

Choose one idea that you most want to remember:

From the scriptures included, which verse or phrase is most meaningful to you?

List one practical application you can make to your own life from this section of reading:

Day 4: On the back of this page, answer the “Life Reflection” questions on page 60.

Day 5: On the back of this page, write a short prayer to God concerning what you’ve learned and thought about:

Turning Around

Unit 5

START: _____

Begin Session

Opening Remarks

Announcements

Opening Prayer

START: _____

Review Day 1

Pages 51-54: ■ Introduction

■ Prayer 1: “God, I am Wrong.”

■ Prayer 2: “God, I am Sorry.”

Overview:

Step three in the process of breaking a sinful habit is to repent of it. Repentance can often be a difficult step for us to take. It begins with acknowledging before God that we have willfully violated His holy stands. We must understand what we have done and we must admit it to God.

Points To Emphasize:

page 52-T

- The New Testament word for “repent” means to turn around – we turn 180 degrees away from sin and toward God. The longer we delay in making the U-turn of repentance, the harder we make it on ourselves.

page 52-Sidebar

- Five Prayers of Repentance
 1. God, I am wrong.
 2. God, I am sorry.
 3. God, forgive me.
 4. God, cleanse me.
 5. God, empower me.

page 52-M

- Prayer 1: “God, I am wrong.” Repentance begins with acknowledging before God that we have willfully violated His holy standards. WE must understand what we have done and we must admit it to God.

page 52-B

- Others may be at fault too, but we have to admit our own part in the wrongdoing.

page 53-M

- Prayer 2: “God, I am sorry.” Admitting wrongdoing (the first prayer) is no

easy thing. Yet there are any number of reasons why someone might admit to doing wrong without really being sorry for it... Repentance requires us to feel truly sorry for what we have done and to say so to God.

page 54-T

- Experiencing remorse is an important stage to pass through and allow God to use in our transforming and healing.

Questions to Discuss:

1. Why do you think the authors devoted one whole chapter to this principle of repentance?
2. Why is it so hard for us to admit when we are wrong?

Share:

Have 1 or 2 people share a meaningful insight, scripture, or application from their personal study.

START: _____

Review Day 2

- Pages 54-57: ■ Prayer 3: “God, Forgive Me.”
■ Prayer 4: “God, Cleanse Me.”
■ Prayer 5: “God, Empower Me.”

Overview:

This section explains the final three prayers: God, forgive me; God, cleanse me; and, God, empower me.

Points To Emphasize:

page 54-B

- Prayer 3: “God, forgive me.” Some people would like the third prayer of repentance to be “God, watch me make up for what I have done.” But no, that will not do. All such efforts must be futile. We can only go to God in faith and plead, “Forgive me.”

page 54-B

- God’s forgiveness is an extraordinary thing. Because of His unmatched love, it comes as a free gift to those who are prepared to humble themselves before Him. One person, indeed, did have to pay for sin (other people’s sin) – that person was Christ dying on the cross. Now He has the power to forgive our sins when we turn to Him in repentance. Freely He grants this forgiveness.

page 55-B

- Prayer 4: “God, cleanse me.” We need the supernatural operation of the Holy Spirit to spiritually wash us clean.

page 56-B

- Prayer 5: “God, empower me.” When we pray for cleansing, we are asking for the spiritual effects of our past sin to be wiped away. When we pray for empowerment, on the other hand, we are asking for God’s help to avoid a repetition of our sin in the future.

page 57-T

- In the end it is Christ’s power, through the Spirit, who enables us to walk away from sin.

Questions to Discuss:

1. How often do you ask God to forgive your sins – in a specific rather than generic way?
2. Were any of the five steps new concepts to you? Which ones? Why do you think Dr. Bright and Dr. Brandt are such strong believers in this approach?

Share:

Have 1 or 2 people share a meaningful insight, scripture, or application from their personal study.

START: _____

Review Day 3

- Pages 57-59: ■ Doing Business with God
■ Saying We are Sorry

Overview:

Points To Emphasize:

page 57-B

- We have to remember that repentance is not a mechanical process but rather a personal process and a spiritual process. In practice, the different aspects of repentance blend into a single spiritual turnaround. Thus each of us needs to approach repentance within the context of an honest, ongoing relationship with God.

page 58-M

- Just as we need to make things right with God, so we need to try to make things right with those whom we have hurt by our sin.

page 58-B

- Unlike our relationship with God, we do not *repent* to other people when we have wronged them by our sin. But we do *apologize* to them. The same humble attitude is required whether we are healing our relationship with God or healing our relationships with other people.

Questions to Discuss:

1. The authors have gone on to suggest that reconciliation and retribution are essential to the healing process? Do you agree or disagree with them? Can you support your ideas?
2. Is it possible to experience personal forgiveness without repentance?

Share:

Have 1 or 2 people share a meaningful insight, scripture, or application from their personal study.

START: _____

Conclude Session

Wrap-Up

Hand out the Before Class Preparation Worksheet for Unit 6

Closing Prayer

END: _____

Defending Your Ground

Before Class Preparation Worksheet

Unit 6

Day 1: Read pages 61-64: Introduction, Overcoming the World

We must use the resources of God to defend against spiritual attacks. We do this by overcoming our spiritual enemies – which are:

1. *The _____ - values that contradict the values of God*
2. *The _____ - sinful desires that trouble us as Christians*
3. *The _____ - a spiritual enemy who employs schemes to entice us into doing wrong*

Choose one idea that you most want to remember:

From the scriptures included, which verse or phrase is most meaningful to you?

List one practical application you can make to your own life from this section of reading:

Day 2: Read pages 64-69: Considering the Flesh to be Dead, Resisting the Devil's Schemes

List the pieces of God's armor (found in Ephesians 6:13-18) that will help us in our struggle against the Devil:

- The belt of _____*
The body armor of _____
The shoes of _____
The shield of _____
The helmet of _____
The sword of the _____

Choose one idea that you most want to remember:

From the scriptures included, which verse or phrase is most meaningful to you?

List one practical application you can make to your own life from this section of reading:

Day 3: Read pages 69-70: God on the Throne

Choose one idea that you most want to remember:

List one practical application you can make to your own life from this section of reading:

Day 4: On the back of this page, answer the "Life Reflection" questions on page 70.

Day 5: On the back of this page, write a short prayer to God concerning what you've learned and thought about.

Defending Your Ground

Unit 6

START: _____

Begin Session

Opening Remarks
Announcements
Opening Prayer

START: _____

Review Day 1

Pages 61-64: ■ Introduction
■ Overcoming the World

Overview:

Satan doesn't like it when we repent of our sin, and he will do everything in his power to pull us back into sin. This chapter helps us to identify our spiritual enemies and then gives us some concrete strategies of defending ourselves against them.

Points To Emphasize:

page 62-M

- The fact is, our enemy, Satan, does not like it when we repent of sin. He wants to pull us back into sin as soon as he can, and he will use every weapon in his arsenal to that end. That is why we can never relax our vigilance once we have repented. Life happens day by day, and we have to be prepared for what comes our way.

page 62-Sidebar

- Our Spiritual Enemies
 - The world – values that contradict the values of God
 - The flesh – sinful desires that trouble us as Christians
 - The Devil – a spiritual enemy who employs schemes to entice us into doing wrong

page 63-T

- The Bible use the term “world” ... to represent a system of values that is opposed to God.

page 64-T

- Romans 12:2 – “Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think.”

Questions to Discuss:

1. What are some of the messages the “world” gives to us every day?
(*Look out for yourself, you DESERVE _____, a little sin never hurts anybody, you only live once!*)
2. Why is it hard to be a “holy nonconformist” (page 64)?

Share:

Have 1 or 2 people share a meaningful insight, scripture, or application from their personal study.

START: _____

Review Day 2

- Pages 64-69: ■ Considering the Flesh to be Dead
■ Resisting the Devil’s Schemes

Overview:

In these two sections of this chapter we find the strategies for defending our ground. As we take action with the Holy Spirit’s power we are able to resist the spiritual attacks against us.

Points To Emphasize:

page 64-M

- The “flesh” is the part of us that is opposed to the Spirit of God – our ungodly desires and selfish motives.

page 64-M

- While the “world” is an outward spiritual enemy, the “flesh” is the spiritual enemy inside us.

page 65-T

- Paul writes: “If through the power of the Spirit you put to death the deeds of your sinful nature, you will live” (Roman 8:13). The phrase “turn from it,” in the Greek, more literally means “put it to death.” Through the power of the Holy Spirit, we can consider the flesh, or our sinful desires, to be dead.

page 66-T

- Along with the world and the flesh, another spiritual enemy is the Devil. This is the being known as Satan, or the Adversary.... While too much human wrong doing has been attributed to the influence of Satan (the Devil does not always make us do it), certainly evil spirits will do what they can to put us in situations where it is easy to do wrong.

page 67-B to 68-T

- Ephesians 6:13-18 – “Put on every piece of God’s armor so you will be able to resist the enemy in the time of evil. Then after the battle you will still be standing firm. Stand your ground, putting on the belt of truth and the body armor of God’s righteousness. For shoes, put on the peace that comes from the Good News so that you will be fully prepared. In addition to all of these, hold up the shield of faith to stop the fiery arrows of the devil. Put on salvation as your helmet, and take the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. Pray in the Spirit at all times and on every occasion.”

Questions to Discuss:

1. Was there anything specific in the section on “Considering the Flesh to be Dead” that you found to be a new idea or especially helpful?

2. At this point in your life, what is the most important piece of armor that you wear? What piece do you most often forget to put on?

Share:

Have 1 or 2 people share a meaningful insight, scripture, or application from their personal study.

START: _____

Review Day 3

Pages 69-70: ■ God on the Throne

Overview:

In this section we read about a real-life situation where a woman is able to identify the source of her spiritual attack and make a conscientious change in her life to deal with it.. Dr. Bright uses the illustration of a radio dial to help us see that we can “change the channel” of the source of the messages that are coming to us.

Points To Emphasize:

page 70-M

- “I want to turn the dial and listen to God.”

page 70-M

- Even though Satan comes against us through the world, the flesh, and his demons, we can stand against his schemes. By faith we can reject the world’s value system, put our flesh to death, and resist demonic influence.

page 70-M

- Defending against spiritual attacks successfully, is a vital part in our quest for transformation and freedom from bondage.

Questions to Discuss:

1. What “channels” (messages) do you most often listen to? In what ways do the messages you are receiving affect your behavior?
2. This chapter closes with the statement, “Defending against spiritual attacks successfully, is a vital part in our quest for transformation and freedom from bondage.” Based on what we have been discussing, why do you think this step is so critical?

Share:

Have 1 or 2 people share a meaningful insight, scripture, or application from their personal study.

START: _____

Conclude Session

Wrap-Up

Hand out the Before Class Preparation Worksheet for Unit 7

Closing Prayer

END: _____

Preventing Setbacks

Before Class Preparation Worksheet

Unit 7

Day 1: Read pages 71-74: Introduction, Focusing on Your Relationship with God, Latching on to God's Promises

Aspects of Fleeing Sin: FLEE

F_____ on your relationship with God

L_____ on to God's promises

E_____ safeguards

E_____ victory

Choose one idea that you most want to remember:

From the scriptures included, which verse or phrase is most meaningful to you?

List one practical application you can make to your own life from this section of reading:

Day 2: Read pages 71-76: Establishing Safeguards, Expecting Victory

Choose one idea that you most want to remember:

From the scriptures included, which verse or phrase is most meaningful to you?

List one practical application you can make to your own life from this section of reading:

Day 3: Read pages 76-77: Applying the Five Steps

In what way is this material challenging you?

In what way is this material helping you?

In what ways do you sense God moving in your life?

In what ways is your relationship with God changing?

Day 4: On the back of this page, answer the "Life Reflection" questions on page 77.

Day 5: On the back of this page, write a short prayer to God concerning what you've learned and thought about.

Preventing Setbacks

Unit 7

START: _____ **Begin Session**

Opening Remarks

Announcements

Opening Prayer

START: _____ **Review Day 1**

Pages 71-74: ■ Introduction

■ Focusing on Your Relationship with God

■ Latching on to God's Promises

Overview:

It is important to take definite action in avoiding temptation. As we consider how to prevent setbacks when it comes to the sin in our lives, we can remember the acrostic FLEE think about fleeing our sin and focusing on God.

Points To Emphasize:

page 72 Sidebar

➤ Aspects of Fleeing Sin

Focus on your relationship with God – Concentrate on what God is doing in your life instead of on your sin habit.

Latch on to God's promises – Claim God's promises that you can be free of you habitual sin.

Establish safeguards – Make choices that will help you avoid tempting situations.

Expect victory – Anticipate being delivered from your sin habit and having virtue established in its place.

page 72-B

➤ “Fix your thought more on the God you desire than on the sin you abhor,” advised the fourteenth-century writer Walter Hilton, It is still good advice today.

page 73-T

➤ While fixing our eyes on temptation makes us more liable to give in to it, fixing our eyes on Jesus gives us strength to use against temptation.... We have His help in our struggles against sin day by day.

page 73-B

➤ The Bible is a multipurpose tool. It “is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. God uses it to prepare and equip His people do every good work” (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

page 74-B

- Bible promises are not mantras. They are not magic spells. But they are powerful, Holy Spirit-inspired truth that God can use to change us inside as we allow their meaning to permeate our being.

Questions to Discuss:

1. When you are faced with temptation, what is your typical first reaction? If you respond inappropriately, do you realize it is sin or do you not even think about it until afterwards? Do you consider God? Do you consider alternatives?
2. Do you have any verses that you have committed to memory that help you when you are faced with temptation? How can you begin to use scripture to help you in this area of your life?

Share:

Have 1 or 2 people share a meaningful insight, scripture, or application from their personal study.

START: _____

Review Day 2

- Pages 75-76: ■ Establishing Safeguards
 ■ Expecting Victory

Overview:

This section of the book addresses our need to take steps to keep away from temptation to do wrong and gives some practical advice on how to do that. The authors also instruct us to expect victory and believe that God will help us eliminate the sin in our lives. God will fill the empty places in our lives with new virtues.

Points To Emphasize:

page 75-T

- It is a matter of being practical.

page 75-M

- One way that all of us can safeguard ourselves from sin, regardless of our moral weak spots, is by seeking help from our fellow believers.

page 75-M

- Of course, even if you establish every possible safeguard, you will still sometimes be tempted. That's because temptation is essentially a crisis of the spirit, and you can never entirely hedge your spirit from wicked influences. But having temptation tap you on the shoulder and try to get you to turn around is a lot different from what happens when you are already facing in the direction of the sin that most tempts you.

page 75-B

- Prayerfully consider how to establish every possible safeguard against temptation.

page 76-T

- We must expect victory over the sins that beset us and expect victory in establishing new habits of holiness.

page 76-T

- Our confidence is not in our own powers of self-control but in the power of God to change us as we cooperate with Him.

page 76-T

- “Supernatural thinking” – hope that may seem like bold ambition but that is actually a reasonable and faithful response to what God has revealed in His Word.

page 76-B

- Romans 8:37 – “Overwhelming victory is ours through Christ, who loved us.”

Questions to Discuss:

1. In what ways do we sometimes “sabotage” ourselves when it comes to sinning?
2. Are there any other safeguards not presented in this chapter that you have found helpful in resisting temptation?

Share:

Have 1 or 2 people share a meaningful insight, scripture, or application from their personal study.

START: _____

Review Day 3

Pages 76-77: ■ Applying the Five Steps

Overview:

Dr. Bright and Dr. Brandt begin this book by giving us some examples of people with “sin habits”. They point out that individuals often find themselves entrenched in some type of sin and want desperately to be free. The good news is that freedom is possible – but only through God.

Points To Emphasize:

page 76-B

- Healing from sin is the goal we are after.

page 77-T

- A review of the five-step process in how to obtain healing from sin:
 - Step 1: Adopt a correct view of God.
 - Step 2: Revise your false beliefs.
 - Step 3: Repent of your sin.
 - Step 4: Defend against spiritual attacks.
 - Step 5. Flee temptation.

page 77-M

- For all of this to really matter to you, you need to apply it to your own sins.

Questions to Discuss:

As you consider all that we have discussed over the past couple of weeks, which of the steps:

- Has been easiest for you to embrace?
- Has been most difficult for you to understand?
- Has been most difficult for you to apply?
- Has been the most beneficial?

Share:

Have 1 or 2 people share a meaningful insight, scripture, or application from their

START: _____

personal study.

Conclude Session

Wrap-Up

Hand out the Before Class Preparation Worksheet for Unit 8

END: _____

Closing Prayer

Your Sin Diagnosis

Before Class Preparation Worksheet

Unit 8

Day 1: Read pages 79-82: Your Sin Diagnosis, The Bible as a Mirror

Choose one idea that you most want to remember:

From the scriptures included, which verse or phrase is most meaningful to you?

List one practical application you can make to your own life from this section of reading:

Day 2: Read pages 82-86: The Personality of Sin, The Problem with “Little Sins”

Three factors affect our personality:

Choose one idea that you most want to remember:

From the scriptures included, which verse or phrase is most meaningful to you?

List one practical application you can make to your own life from this section of reading:

Day 3: Read pages 86-89: Becoming a Recovering Sinner, Introducing the Sin Families

Choose one idea that you most want to remember:

List one practical application you can make to your own life from this section of reading:

Day 4: On the back of this page, answer the “Life Reflection” questions on page 89.

Day 5: On the back of this page, write a short prayer to God concerning what you’ve learned and thought about.

Your sin Diagnosis

Unit 8

START: _____

Begin Session

Opening Remarks

Announcements

Opening Prayer

START: _____

Review Day 1

- Pages 79-82: ■ Your Sin Diagnosis
 ■ The Bible as a Mirror

Overview:

Sin sickness is a serious matter, and it is important to get an accurate diagnosis for your sin just as it is important to get an accurate diagnosis when you are physically ill. Furthermore, sins may disappear from our lives and then reappear, perhaps joined by others, recombining in a somewhat different form every time. Sin is constantly knocking at our door. However, the Bible is a tool that can help us identify our sins, and God promises to help us find a way to healing.

Points To Emphasize:

- page 79-B ➤ Before you start trying to treat your troublesome sin, do a careful self-diagnosis.
- page 80-T ➤ Sins often interact and feed on each other. Without Divine healing, one symptom may improve and others will likely grow more grave.
- page 81-T ➤ We cannot afford to take a simplistic view of our sin problem. “The human heart is the most deceitful of all things, and desperately wicked. Who really knows how bad it is?” (Jeremiah 17:9). Only God knows. With His help, we can keep testing and examining our lives to expose ever more thoroughly the wickedness that is lodged there.
- page 81-M ➤ Because our sin diagnosis keeps changing, we need to constantly remain on the alert. First we need to be alert to what we are doing and thinking. Then we need to be alert to how our actions and thoughts line up with the Bible’s teaching.

page 81-M

➤ Scripture is like a mirror that shows us who we really are.

page 82-T

➤ Identifying all our sins in a biblical way, then, is a prerequisite to successful healing of the soul. We have to know what sins to go after in our lives if we want to defeat them.

Questions to Discuss:

1. Had you previously considered that your sin actually needed a “diagnosis”? In what ways does that description help you to think about addressing your sin in a new way?
2. In what ways have you used the Bible as a “mirror” in your life?

Share:

Have 1 or 2 people share a meaningful insight, scripture, or application from their personal study.

START _____

Review Day 2

- Pages 82-86: ■ The Personality of Sin
 ■ The Problem with “Little Sins”

Overview:

Have you ever considered that your personality type predisposes you to certain kinds of sin? In this portion of the lesson, Dr. Bright and Dr. Brandt discuss the various ways that three key areas affect our personality, specifically our family environment, our individual temperament, and external events. They go on to point out that it is important to deal early on with the sin in our life in order to avoid more serious sin ... and more serious consequences.

Points To Emphasize:

page 82-B

➤ Each of us has a unique personality, and our personality type predisposes us more to certain kinds of sin than to other kinds. By understanding our personality type, then, we can better predict what kinds of temptation most easily waylay us.

page 82-83

➤ We are born with a sin nature, but the way in which our innate sinfulness is manifested will vary based on at least three areas affecting our personality:

- Family environment
- Temperament
- External events

page 84-B

➤ Take some time to ask God for insight into yourself, to think through your personality history, and to get the opinions of those who know you best so that you can use your personality as a clue to your sin diagnosis.

page 85-T

➤ Little sins grow into big ones.

page 85-B to 86-T

➤ Invariably, if a Christian has seemed to take a sudden fall into sin, a closer inspection will show that the person had for some time been flirting with sin before openly courting it.

- If you want to keep your sins from multiplying ... you need to ... act soon and act decisively.

Questions to Discuss:

1. Why is it important to stick to diagnosing our own sins rather than the sins of others?
2. Why do we often justify our “little” sins?

Share:

Have 1 or 2 people share a meaningful insight, scripture, or application from their personal study.

START _____

Review Day 3

- Pages 86-89: ■ Becoming a Recovering Sinner
 ■ Introducing the Sin Families

Overview:

Trying to live a holy life is a complex proposition. Unfortunately, it takes a lot of hard work. The good news is that salvation opens the doors to God’s resources, and so the Spirit can substantially defeat sin for us in this life as we obey God’s commands. It takes us intentionally allowing God to work in us and through us in order experience freedom from sin. Dr. Bright and Dr. Brandt challenge us to face our sin head-on as we strive to be more like Christ.

Points To Emphasize:

page 86-B

- Every day, we are an invitation for temptation.

page 86-B

- It would be easier to resist temptation if sin were not so attractive.

page 87-T

- We can get to a point where we never again repeat a sin that was once a regular habit for us. It really is possible to win over a sin. We may never be free from the temptation again, and we likely will fail God again in another way later on. But as we deal with our sins one after another, we can experience victories over each of them and over time raise our level of holiness.

page 87-M

- You can get past your sin, even if the possibility of slipping back into it never quite goes away.

page 87-M

- It is a mystery why some people struggle with certain sins. Equally, it is a mystery why some people have an easier time than others in leaving sins behind. Sometimes God immediately takes a sinful desire away, while at other times He lets us struggle against the desire because we have not truly repented. In every case we can be confident that it is His will for us to resist temptation and that He is present with us to help us remain pure.

page 88-T

- We have come up with ten sin families, each with its own parent sin.... In the families headed by these parent sins there may be found several other related sins.... Real life is not as cut and dried as our list of sins may

appear. Nevertheless, we believe our sin families represent a helpful way of looking at the universe of sins and figuring out where our particular sins fit in.

page 89-B

- Tell yourself, *I will face my problems head-on. With all my strength, I will seek out God and His will for my life. I will settle for nothing less than ever-advancing progress toward becoming more like Christ.*

Questions to Discuss:

1. In what ways does our church embrace the concept of a “recovering sinner”? In what ways does it discourage people from engaging in the process of being a “recovering sinner”? How can you personally help people to acknowledge their sin?
2. Did you take a look at the list of “sin families”? Did anything surprise you as you read?

Share:

Have 1 or 2 people share a meaningful insight, scripture, or application from their personal study.

START: _____

Conclude Session

Wrap-Up

Hand out the Before Class Preparation Worksheet for Unit 9

Closing Prayer

END: _____

Pride: It's All about Me

Before Class Preparation Worksheet

Unit 9

Note: As we begin “Part 2” of this book, we will be reading each chapter. Although some of the chapters may be more applicable to your life than others, sin is sin and each one of us will have something to learn about each “Sin Family.”

Day 1: Read pages 93-97: Introduction, What Number is Your Pride?, Me, Marvelous Me

Choose one idea that you most want to remember:

From the scriptures included, which verse or phrase is most meaningful to you?

List one practical application you can make to your own life from this section of reading:

Day 2: Read pages 97-101: Look Here, Clock Control, The Price of Pride

Choose one idea that you most want to remember:

From the scriptures included, which verse or phrase is most meaningful to you?

List one practical application you can make to your own life from this section of reading:

Day 3: Read pages 101-104: Thinking Less of Oneself and Thinking of Oneself Less

Choose one idea that you most want to remember:

From the scriptures included, which verse or phrase is most meaningful to you?

List one practical application you can make to your own life from this section of reading:

Day 4: Work through the “Soul Prescription for Pride” on pages 104-108.

Day 5: On the back of this page, write a short prayer to God concerning what you've learned and thought about.

Pride: It's All about Me

Unit 9

Go through every chapter in Part 2! You will find that each chapter will minister in different ways to the members of your group. There are many different aspects of each "Sin Family" and there will be something to learn and apply each time you meet.

START: _____

Begin Session

Opening Remarks

Announcements

Opening Prayer

START: _____

Review Day 1

- Pages 93-97:
- Introduction
 - What Number is Your Pride?
 - Me, Marvelous Me

Overview:

(Opening Paragraph to the Chapter) It is no accident that we start our tour of the sin families with the sin of pride. In some sense, pride is the foundational sin. As Bible commentator William Barclay declared, "Pride is the ground in which all the other sins grow, and the parent from which all the others sins come." With pride, we can justify any other form of rebellion against God's commands. However, it is important that we distinguish between sinful pride and justifiable pride.

The opposing virtue of pride is humility.

Points to Emphasize:

page 94-B

- Certainly, any pride that ignores God, taking credit for His gifts, is to be condemned. The same goes for any pride that elevates one person by pressing another down.

page 95-T

- Frederica Mathewes-Green has distinguished between what she calls "Pride One" and Pride Two." According to her Pride One is a narcissism that constantly compares itself with others. She says, "Pride One is always asking anxiously, Am I smarter than they are? Richer? Better-looking?"

Pride Two, meanwhile is “More akin to confidence.” It is “a quiet, centered pride that is compatible with modesty because it doesn’t have a fretful need to show off.” It grows out of a realistic appraisal of one’s God given gifts and cultivated abilities.”

We should seek and encourage Pride Two, but at the same time we must remember that we are susceptible to Pride One.

page 95-B

- At least three key terms define the tendency of a person to think he or she is more wonderful than the next person. They are the terms, *conceit*, *vanity*, and *self-righteousness*.

Questions to Discuss:

1. Do you think there is more sinful pride inside or outside of the church?

Support your answer.

(Do not allow this to become a gossip session or for people to be critical. The point of this question is to address the attitude of sinful pride and how it affects the Church.)

2. How can we protect ourselves from moving from “Pride Two” to “Pride One”?

Share:

Have 1 or 2 people share a meaningful insight, scripture, or application from their personal study.

START: _____

Review Day 2

- Pages 97-101: ■ Look Here
■ Clock Control
■ The Price of Pride

Overview:

The sin of pride can be very subtle and can show up in cleverly disguised ways. In this part of the chapter Dr. Bright and Dr. Brandt go beyond simply a definition of pride, to actually giving us examples of ways this sin is often displayed in our lives.

Points to Emphasize:

page 97-T

- If you are conceited, vain, or self-righteous, you probably want others to know how great you are. There are different ways you can do that. Three key terms for these strategies are *boasting*, *showing off*, and *selfish ambition*.

page 97-B to 98-T

- Jeremiah 9:23-24 – “This is what the LORD says; ‘Don’t let the wise boast in their wisdom or the powerful boast in their power, or the rich boast in their riches. But those who wish to boast should boast in this alone: that they truly know me and understand that I am the LORD.’”

page 99-M

- Working hard and trying to be a good steward of our time is one thing.... But rushing and pushing as if our scheduling preference is what matters most is another thing altogether.

page 99-B to 100-T

- We cannot rush God. We cannot control all the events in our lives. We must not forget that others might be trampled in our pursuit of our own timing for events. Therefore, we should not get restless and impatient. Of course, we need to be faithful and diligent ... but at the same time we can be resting in the fact that God is in charge of the times and seasons of our lives.

page 100-B

- Through pride we disgrace ourselves.

page 100-T

- In addition to the way pride bounces back and embarrasses the proud, so also pride injures those all around ...

page 101-M

- Ultimately, then, pride is a faith issue because it causes us to focus on ourselves, ignoring what God has done and disobeying what He has commanded.

Questions to Discuss:

1. How can we keep working hard, achievement, and success from becoming selfish ambition?
2. In what ways do you attempt to have “clock control” in your own life?

Share:

Have 1 or 2 people share a meaningful insight, scripture, or application from their personal study.

START: _____

Review Day 3

Pages 101-104: ■ Thinking Less of Oneself and Thinking of Oneself Less

Overview:

What is humility? Humility is being realistic about the human condition. This means we recognize that whatever advantages we possess were given to us by God. It means we recognize that as sinners we are not so different from other people. And most importantly it means we recognize that, compared to god Himself, we are not marvelous at all.

Points to Emphasize:

page 102-B

- Humility is possible for us ... when we surrender our pride to the Holy Spirit’s ministrations. He will make us humble. And as He does so, he will make us more like Christ.

page 103-B

- We should not pursue humility for the sake of its rewards; rather, we should pursue it because it is right.

Questions to Discuss:

1. In what ways does our society undermine the concept of humility?
2. In what concrete ways do we see the virtue of humility lived out in our church-family?

Share:

Have 1 or 2 people share a meaningful insight, scripture, or application from their personal study.

START: _____

Conclude Session

Wrap-Up

Hand out the Before Class Preparation Worksheet for Unit 10

Closing Prayer

END: _____

Fear: From Doubt to Dread

Before Class Preparation Worksheet

Unit 10

Day 1: Read pages 109-113: Introduction, Fear and God, Courage to Walk on Water

Choose one idea that you most want to remember:

From the scriptures included, which verse or phrase is most meaningful to you?

List one practical application you can make to your own life from this section of reading:

Day 2: Read pages 114-115: An Anxious Heart

Choose one idea that you most want to remember:

From the scriptures included, which verse or phrase is most meaningful to you?

List one practical application you can make to your own life from this section of reading:

Day 3: Read pages 115-118: A Single-Minded Approach to Ending Anxiety, Trust in God

Choose one idea that you most want to remember:

From the scriptures included, which verse or phrase is most meaningful to you?

List one practical application you can make to your own life from this section of reading:

Day 4: Work through the “Soul Prescription for Fear” on pages 118-122.

Day 5: On the back of this page, write a short prayer to God concerning what you’ve learned and thought about.

Fear: From Doubt to Dread

Unit 10

START: _____

Begin Session

Opening Remarks
Announcements
Opening Prayer

START: _____

Review Day 1

Pages 109-113: ■ Introduction
■ Fear and God
■ Courage to Walk on Water

Overview:

What are you afraid of? What words do you most often use to rationalize your fear? Some fear may be natural and acceptable. But living in fear because you refuse to move on is another matter: Dr. Bright and Dr. Brandt call that kind of fear sin. It is often easy to trust in our own ideas and plans in order to meet our own needs. God wants us to trust in Him completely.

The opposing virtue of fear is faith.

Points to Emphasize:

page 110-M

- If you have a fear habit, letting go of your fear and trusting God completely might seem like an impossibility. So let us assure you with Scripture that it is possible to substitute faith for the anxiety and the worry you are presently feeling.

page 111-T

- Psalm 34:4 – “I prayed to the LORD, and He answered me, He freed me from all my fears.”

page 112-T

- There is one kind of fear we *should* cultivate: the fear of God. ... This sort of fear is a compound of awe and reverence.

page 113-B

- 2 Timothy 1:7 – “God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline.”

Questions to Discuss:

1. What are some of the things we fear: in our society, in our churches, for

- our children? How does faith in God free us from those fears?
2. How would you differentiate between acceptable fear and fear that is sin?

Share:

Have 1 or 2 people share a meaningful insight, scripture, or application from their personal study.

START: _____

Review Day 2

Pages 114-115: ■ An Anxious Heart

Overview:

Related to the sin of fear are the sins of worry and anxiety. In Matthew 6 Jesus uses very simple words to teach us about worry. In a nutshell: We don't need to worry – we have a heavenly Father who cares for us!

Points to Emphasize:

page 114-115

- Matthew 6:25-34

page 115-B

- Life is a day-by-day affair. We do not know all that will happen in the future – but we do not need to. God will be with us in the future just as surely as He is with us in the present. Our part is to develop our trust in Him, leaving fear and anxiety behind in the process.

Questions to Discuss:

1. What is the difference between fear, worry, and anxiety?
2. In what ways can we develop and strengthen our trust in God?

Share:

Have 1 or 2 people share a meaningful insight, scripture, or application from their personal study.

START: _____

Review Day 3

Pages 115-118: ■ A Single-Minded Approach to Ending Anxiety
■ Trust in God

Overview:

The New Testament word for anxiety means “doubled-minded.” That’s the problem with people who have an anxiety habit. With part of their mind, they are looking to God; but with another part of their mind, they are fretting about what might happen to them. God desires for them to have their mind wholly fixed on Him, for then they could know peace.

Points to Emphasize:

page 116-B

- Philippians 4:6-7 – “Tell God what you need, and thank Him for all He has done. Then you will experience God’s peace, which exceeds anything we

can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.”

page 117-T

➤ The answer to worry and fear in all their forms is faith in God.

page 117-B

➤ Faith is not the risk it seems. Our faith has a solid basis because the one whom we trust is all-powerful and cards about us.

Questions to Discuss:

1. Do you know anyone who has a full trust in God for all things? What other qualities do you see in that person?
2. What makes “faith” seem risky?

Share:

Have 1 or 2 people share a meaningful insight, scripture, or application from their personal study.

START: _____

Conclude Session

Wrap-Up

Hand out the Before Class Preparation Worksheet for Unit 11

Closing Prayer

END: _____

Anger: When Mad is Bad

Before Class Preparation Worksheet

Unit 11

Day 1: Read pages 123-128: Introduction, The Danger in Anger, Lashing Out

Choose one idea that you most want to remember:

From the scriptures included, which verse or phrase is most meaningful to you?

List one practical application you can make to your own life from this section of reading:

Day 2: Read pages 128-134: The Wolf of Hatred, Getting Mad and Getting Even, Violence: The Shortcut that Goes Nowhere

Choose one idea that you most want to remember:

From the scriptures included, which verse or phrase is most meaningful to you?

List one practical application you can make to your own life from this section of reading:

Day 3: Read pages 134-136: The Forgiveness Factor

Choose one idea that you most want to remember:

From the scriptures included, which verse or phrase is most meaningful to you?

List one practical application you can make to your own life from this section of reading:

Day 4: Work through the “Soul Prescription for Anger” on pages 136-140.

Day 5: On the back of this page, write a short prayer to God concerning what you’ve learned and thought about.

Anger: When Mad is Bad

Unit 11

START: _____

Begin Session

Opening Remarks
Announcements
Opening Prayer

START: _____

Review Day 1

Pages 123-128: ■ Introduction
■ The Danger in Anger
■ Lashing Out

Overview:

Anger is a strong feeling of dislike, displeasure, or antagonism. It is connected to a host of other negative feelings and behaviors, including rage, hatred, bitterness, vengefulness, and violence. In this chapter we will look at how to lay down such burdens. In this section Dr. Brandt first discusses how we can learn to separate sinful anger from rare, but still possible, forms of acceptable anger.

The opposing virtue of anger is forgiveness.

Points to Emphasize:

page 124-B

➤ A heavy burden indeed is the anger that many of us carry ... we may have good reasons for our emotion, but we are weighed down by it all the same.

page 125-T

➤ When we see unrighteousness or injustice, getting upset is a reasonable response. But at other times our anger is improper, such as when we misinterpret what is going on or are too quick to take offense or let our anger grow out of proportion to the cause. Our anger is also unrighteous if we hang on to it for too long.

page 127-B

➤ Anger produces bodily changes that cannot be ignored.

Questions to Discuss:

1. What are some of the ways we see anger displayed through the media

- (movies, TV shows, the news)? Which ones are healthy or godly?
2. In what ways does our society celebrate anger? As Christians, how can we help people handle their anger in a godly way?

Share:

Have 1 or 2 people share a meaningful insight, scripture, or application from their personal study.

START: _____

Review Day 2

- Pages 128-134: ■ The Wolf of Hatred
- Getting Mad and Getting Even
 - Violence: The Shortcut that Goes Nowhere

Overview:

Anger can lead to bitterness, acts of revenge, and eventually violence.

Points to Emphasize:

page 129-M

- Bitterness is like hatred in that it results from the harm others have done us, but it stays closer to home. While hatred is a feeling of intense hostility toward another person, bitterness is a rancor we nurse in our hearts to keep our anger alive. Hatred is the hostile emissary that we mentally send out to our enemy; bitterness is a fire that smolders deep inside. Both are sinful.

page 130-B

- 1 Peter 3:9 – “Don’t repay evil for evil. Don’t retaliate with insults when people insult you.”

Questions to Discuss:

1. What kind of anger and hatred do we justify as Americans? Do you think God sees it the same way or differently? Why?
2. What kind of anger and hatred do we justify within the Church? Do you think God sees it the same way or differently? Why?

Share:

Have 1 or 2 people share a meaningful insight, scripture, or application from their personal study.

START _____

Review Day 3

- Pages 134-136: ■ The Forgiveness Factor

Overview:

What do you do if you are filled with rage or hatred or bitterness? What do you do if you are vengeful or violent? By God’s grace, you get rid of the sin of anger and replace it with the virtue of forgiveness. (Opening paragraph – p.134)

Points to Emphasize:

- page 134-T ➤ Anger is an emotion that is set off when someone else has done something we do not like. We may be quite right in disliking what the other person has said or done. Sometimes, in fact, the offense is monstrous ... but because the offense has a personal origin, the only way to free ourselves of the destructive emotion we feel and move ahead in life is to forgive the person who did wrong.
- page 134-B ➤ Jesus Christ paid the penalty for our sins on the cross. It was not just or fair, but He willingly did it so that mercy would triumph over justice. We follow in His footsteps when we forgive one who has committed an offense against us.
- page 135-T ➤ “Forgiveness is not a feeling ... It is a choice that goes beyond feelings; it is an activity of the will.” We choose to forgive and we pray that the loving feelings will follow. This is loving by faith.
- page 135-M ➤ And what about reconciliation? A restored relationship should be our goal whenever it is a possibility.... But reconciliation requires two. The other person may be unwilling to admit the wrong he or she has done and seek to restore the relationship or maybe you are unable to reconcile with the other person.... In such cases, remember that you can still forgive the person. Unlike reconciliation, forgiveness requires only one.
- page 135-B ➤ Hard as it is, forgiveness is a blessing to us because it frees us from anger and all the ill effects that anger brings upon us.

Questions to Discuss:

1. What is so hard about forgiveness?
2. Do you know anyone personally who has experienced freedom through the act of forgiveness? If not, does that fact say anything about our ability as Christians to forgive?

Share:

Have 1 or 2 people share a meaningful insight, scripture, or application from their personal study.

START: _____

Conclude Session

Wrap-Up

Hand out the Before Class Preparation Worksheet for Unit 12

Closing Prayer

END: _____

Overindulgence: Enough Is Enough

Before Class Preparation Worksheet

Unit 12

Day 1: Read pages 141-146: Introduction, The Lure of the Refrigerator, Bliss in a Bottle?, Drugs: When Escape Becomes a Trap

Choose one idea that you most want to remember:

From the scriptures included, which verse or phrase is most meaningful to you?

List one practical application you can make to your own life from this section of reading:

Day 2: Read pages 146-150: Shopping as Recreation, Media Mad, Appetites out of Control, The Medical Model

Choose one idea that you most want to remember:

From the scriptures included, which verse or phrase is most meaningful to you?

List one practical application you can make to your own life from this section of reading:

Day 3: Read pages 150-153: A Liar Who Encountered the Truth, Choose Your Master, Everything in Moderation

Choose one idea that you most want to remember:

From the scriptures included, which verse or phrase is most meaningful to you?

List one practical application you can make to your own life from this section of reading:

Day 4: Work through the “Soul Prescription for Overindulgence” on pages 153-158.

Day 5: On the back of this page, write a short prayer to God concerning what you’ve learned and thought about.

Overindulgence: Enough is Enough

Unit 12

START: _____ **Begin Session**

Opening Remarks
Announcements
Opening Prayer

START: _____ **Review Day 1**

Pages 141-146: ■ Introduction
■ The Lure of the Refrigerator
■ Bliss in a Bottle?
■ Drugs: When Escape Becomes a Trap

Overview:

Sinful overindulgence can take many forms. Through stories and teaching Dr. Brandt and Dr. Bright begin to identify some of the forms overindulgence can take in our lives: gluttony, drunkenness, and drug abuse.

The opposing virtue of overindulgence is moderation.

Points to Emphasize:

- page 142-M ➤ Of course, everyone overindulges occasionally.... But what we are talking about here is an ongoing overindulgence that interferes with healthy and holy living.
- page 142-B ➤ Overeating is the more common term these days, but gluttony is the time-honored label for the sin of putting more food in your mouth than your body needs for its health and strength.
- page 144-T ➤ Of all forms of overindulgence, none is more thoroughly covered in Scripture than drunkenness.
- page 145-T ➤ Unlike alcohol, drugs are not specifically mentioned in Scripture.... It is a safe bet that we can take the biblical injunctions against drunkenness as applying drug abuse as well.

Questions to Discuss:

1. Is there anything about this topic that makes you uncomfortable?

2. Why do you think Christians so often overlook the sin of overindulgence?

Share:

Have 1 or 2 people share a meaningful insight, scripture, or application from their personal study.

Review Day 2

Pages 146-150: ■ Shopping as Recreation

■ Media Mad

■ Appetites out of Control

■ The Medical Model

Overview:

Dr. Bright and Dr. Brandt go on to discuss several other overindulgences including Shopaholism, overuse of media, and the concept of many and diverse “appetites”. They also discuss how the “medical model” of identifying these behaviors as addictions and diseases undercuts the spiritual and ethical aspects of our actions.

Points to Emphasize:

page 146-T

➤ Materialism is a widespread illness, and for many it shows up in the way they buy far more than they really need. They shop just for the fun of it, and for the kick they get from owning new stuff.

page 146-B

➤ We do not mean to imply that all buying is bad. God loves to bless His children. It is a good thing when we can meet our own needs and even indulge our moderate and reasonable desires for pleasure. The problem lies in excessive accumulation of “stuff” out of a desire to meet some inner need.

page 147-B

➤ Our media options are proliferating like never before ... there are a couple of problems with this ... First, excessive use of media can have a mind-numbing effect.... Second, too much time with entertainment distracts from other activities that are equally or more important.

page 149-T

➤ As diverse as are the moral weak points of the human race, so diverse are the forms overindulgence may take. Yet all forms of overindulgence have something in common: they are ways of feeding an appetite.

page 150-T

➤ The preferred approach at present is to use a medical model ... people who cannot seem to stop drinking or taking drugs are deemed to have a disease, called an addiction. A genetic cause is at the root of the addiction, and the addiction needs to be treated with methods commonly used for other physical and emotional diseases.... There is some value in the medical model ... but the medical model is woefully incomplete. By labeling over-indulgent behaviors a “disease,” the medical model effectively cuts off the spiritual and ethical aspects of the human being involved. A person’s behavior may be an addiction, but it is also sin.

Questions to Discuss:

1. What are your thoughts about the authors approach to the medical model versus personal accountability for sin?
2. What types of overindulgences are best served by the medical model? Is there an aspect of “sin” that needs to still be addressed? What types of overindulgences require us to begin with identifying the behavior as sin?

Share:

Have 1 or 2 people share a meaningful insight, scripture, or application from their personal study.

START: _____

Review Day 3

- Pages 151-153: ■ A Liar Who Encountered the Truth
- Choose Your Master
 - Everything in Moderation

Overview:

Being confronted with our sin can often be painful. This section begins with a story of someone who did not want to accept responsibility for their overindulgences. Dr. Bright and Dr. Brandt go on to emphasize that we must all choose our master – and our only true master can be God.

Points to Emphasize:

page 151-B

- We will always serve someone or something.

page 152-M

- Moderation is the proper response when overindulgence often involves substances or experiences that are good in themselves.

page152-B

- Defining what is “excess” is a challenging, personal struggle.

page 153-B

- Moderation is what God wants to see in our lives. As we overindulge in our favorite ways, God grieves because He knows we are not filling ourselves with what we really need, and that is more of Himself.

Questions to Discuss:

1. Have you ever considered your overindulgence as a master?
2. Why are we often uncomfortable with the concept of “moderation”?

Share:

Have 1 or 2 people share a meaningful insight, scripture, or application from their personal study.

START: _____

Conclude Session

Wrap-Up

Hand out the Before Class Preparation Worksheet for Unit 13

Closing Prayer

END: _____

Dissatisfaction: The Restless Heart

Before Class Preparation Worksheet

Unit 13

Day 1: Read pages 159-162: Introduction, The Grass on the Other Side of the Fence

Choose one idea that you most want to remember:

From the scriptures included, which verse or phrase is most meaningful to you?

List one practical application you can make to your own life from this section of reading:

Day 2: Read pages 163-166: Unappeasable Appetite for Wealth, Hands That Take Instead of Work

Choose one idea that you most want to remember:

From the scriptures included, which verse or phrase is most meaningful to you?

List one practical application you can make to your own life from this section of reading:

Day 3: Read pages 166-169: The Attitude of Ingratitude, All is Well

Choose one idea that you most want to remember:

From the scriptures included, which verse or phrase is most meaningful to you?

List one practical application you can make to your own life from this section of reading:

Day 4: Work through the “Soul Prescription for Dissatisfaction” on pages 169-174.

Day 5: On the back of this page, write a short prayer to God concerning what you’ve learned and thought about.

Dissatisfaction: The Restless Heart

Unit 13

START: _____

Begin Session

Opening Remarks
Announcements
Opening Prayer

START: _____

Review Day 1

Pages 159-162: ■ Introduction
■ The Grass on the Other Side of the Fence

Overview:

Why are some people chronically dissatisfied, while others are content with the way things are? Even in the Bible we find examples of people who were greedy, jealous, and generally dissatisfied. This chapter is designed to convict us of our dissatisfaction and help us develop contentment in our hearts.

The opposing virtue of dissatisfaction is contentment.

Points to Emphasize:

page 161-T

➤ The kind of dissatisfaction we are concerned with here is the kind that says, ‘I want more money, mores tuff, more fu, more comfort in life – and I deserve it. I’d better take over the responsibility for myself; God isn’t going a good enough job.’

page 161-B

➤ We have so much, but we want more. ... This attitude goes by the name of envy or jealousy or covetousness.... It is an improper craving for something another person possesses to such an extent that you cannot be happy unless you have it.

Questions to Discuss:

1. What in our culture feeds our dissatisfaction?
2. How do you evaluate in your own life your satisfaction levels?

Share:

Have 1 or 2 people share a meaningful insight, scripture, or application from their personal study.

START: _____

Review Day 2

Pages 163-166: ■ Unappeasable Appetite for Wealth
■ Hands That Take Instead of Work

Overview:

Two outcomes of our dissatisfaction can be greed and/or stealing.

Points to Emphasize:

page 163-M

➤ Greed is the inordinate love of money and what money can buy. It is a form of dissatisfaction with one's financial position that results in striving selfishly for more money rather than seeking after God.

page 164-T

➤ What matters is not how much you have but how badly you want more and what you are willing to do to get it.

page 165-M

➤ When greed and envy mate, they often produce the ugly offspring of stealing. This is the sin of taking money or possessions belonging to another.

page 165-M

➤ To see the true extent of this sin, we need to define "stealing" widely enough. Failing to pay bills or taxes that we owe is stealing. Doing less work than we are being paid for is stealing. Using copyrighted material without the permission of the owner is stealing. With such a definition, we can see that stealing is not so rare a problem as we might otherwise have thought. In fact, many people are willing to steal if they think they can get away with it.

Questions to Discuss:

1. Do you agree or disagree with the authors' wide definition of stealing (p.226)?
2. In addition to stealing, what other behaviors can result from dissatisfaction?

Share:

Have 1 or 2 people share a meaningful insight, scripture, or application from their personal study.

START _____

Review Day 3

Pages 166-169: ■ The Attitude of Ingratitude
■ All is Well

Overview:

This section talks about ingratitude versus gratitude. Are you thankful for the blessings God has bestowed upon you?

Points to Emphasize:

page 167-B

➤ Stop for a minute and think about what you *do* have.

page 167-B

➤ Philippians 4:6 – "Pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank Him for all He has done."

page 168-T

- Gratitude is like a lens that helps us refocus our attention from our perceived lacks ... to our actual blessings from God. In this way, gratitude leads us to contentment and brings healing to our soul.

page 168-M

- Contentment ... is a kind of satisfaction that depends only on the presence of God in our lives, not on whether we are presently up or down in the changing mix of life's circumstances.

page 169-T

- When Christ fills your heart and mind, you can be at peace and content with the things, people, and circumstances our sovereign God has placed in your life.

Questions to Discuss:

1. Why is it that even though we have Christ, many Christians are still dissatisfied?
2. What are you thankful for today?

Share:

Have 1 or 2 people share a meaningful insight, scripture, or application from their personal study.

START _____

Conclude Session

Wrap-Up

Hand out the Before Class Preparation Worksheet for Unit 14

Closing Prayer

END _____

Immorality: Sex Misused

Before Class Preparation Worksheet

Unit 14

Day 1: Read pages 175-180: Introduction, Sex Without Marriage

Choose one idea that you most want to remember:

From the scriptures included, which verse or phrase is most meaningful to you?

List one practical application you can make to your own life from this section of reading:

Day 2: Read pages 180-188: Violation of the Marriage Bed, Same-Sex Sex, Immodesty: The Sex Appeal, Sexual Sins of Mind and Eye

Choose one idea that you most want to remember:

From the scriptures included, which verse or phrase is most meaningful to you?

List one practical application you can make to your own life from this section of reading:

Day 3: Read pages 189-191: Your Purity Potential

Choose one idea that you most want to remember:

From the scriptures included, which verse or phrase is most meaningful to you?

List one practical application you can make to your own life from this section of reading:

Day 4: Work through the “Soul Prescription for Immorality” on pages 191-194.

Day 5: On the back of this page, write a short prayer to God concerning what you’ve learned and thought about.

Immorality: Sex Misused

Unit 14

START: _____

Begin Session

Opening Remarks
Announcements
Opening Prayer

START: _____

Review Day 1

Pages 175-180: ■ Introduction
■ Sex Without Marriage

Overview:

Dr. Bright and Dr. Brandt believe the Bible is clear about sex – it is to happen between a man and a woman who are married. As we begin this chapter they discuss what a gift sex is within the right context – that of marriage.

The opposing virtue of immorality is purity.

Points to Emphasize:

page 176-T

➤ Sex is a great thing – one of God’s best blessings to us. Sex without sin is a beautiful act of union.

page 177-T

➤ Whether the sexual immorality is “victimless” or “victimizing,” it is a violation of God’s will for human beings.

page 180-M

➤ Regardless of your past sexual history, with God’s help you can begin today to choose to remain pure. Every day you wake up alone will be a victory for you and a delight to God.

Questions to Discuss:

1. Sexual messages bombard us every day from many sources. How can we best neutralize the negative effects these messages have on us?
2. Why is the whole topic of sex a difficult issue for us to discuss as Christians?

Share:

Have 1 or 2 people share a meaningful insight, scripture, or application from their personal study.

START: _____

Review Day 2

Pages 180-188: ■ Violation of the Marriage Bed

- Same-Sex Sex
- Immodesty: The Sex Appeal
- Sexual Sins of Mind and Eye

Overview:

In this part of the book, Dr. Bright and Dr. Brandt address specific sins plaguing or society – those of adultery, homosexuality, immodesty in various forms, and pornography.

Points to Emphasize:

- page 180-B ➤ Adultery is sex between two people who are not married to each other and when at least one of them is married to someone else. This violation of sex is called infidelity and extramarital sex.
- page 182-B ➤ Hebrews 13:4 – “Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral.”
- page 183-M ➤ Adultery is often the last step in a series of sins that take place within a marriage. Disappointment or conflict in a marriage is never a justifiable cause for adultery. If you feel you do not love your spouse anymore and do love someone else, the answer is not to get involved with that other person; the answer is to yield to the love of God through repentance and obedience. Repentance will change your thoughts and actions so that you can love your spouse and reject all others who would come between you.
- page 183-M ➤ The truth is that if there is a genetic component to some people’s homosexuality (and this is by no means finally settled), it at most opens the door to that behavior; it certainly does not *determine* that behavior. The decision to indulge in homosexual activity is a choice, and a sinful one.
- page 184-T ➤ We are not saying that breaking a homosexual sin habit is easy. But whether you have indulged in homosexual activity a little or a lot, or if you have just wanted to, God is more than able to help you escape the temptations you face. He loves gay people just the way He loves all sinners (that includes every one of us), and He can help you to have a chaste life as a single person or a satisfying marriage with a person of the opposite sex.
- page 185-M ➤ 1 Timothy 2:9-10 – “I want women to be modest in their appearance. They should wear decent and appropriate clothing and not draw attention to themselves by the way they fix their hair or by wearing gold or pearls or expensive clothes. For women who claim to be devoted to God should make themselves attractive by the good things they do.”
- page 186-T ➤ Not all sex involves two bodies coming together; sometimes the sin occurs with just the eye or the mind.

Questions to Discuss:

1. The issues related to sexual sins are probably the most politicized in our

country. What thoughts and reactions did you have to the material presented here?

2. Does the Bible really speak to this issue – and do we as Christians really believe what the Bible has to say today to the wide range of behaviors related to this topic?

Share:

Have 1 or 2 people share a meaningful insight, scripture, or application from their personal study.

START: _____

Review Day 3

Pages 189-191: ■ Your Purity Potential

Overview:

God loves us and wants to preserve us from suffering. His prescriptions of sexual abstinence before marriage and of fidelity within marriage protect us from harm and at the same time offer married couples the freedom and enjoyment of sex as it was meant to be. Most of all, they show the way to holiness in relation to that important part of our life known as sexuality.

Points to Emphasize:

page 190-T

- You can't stop sinning ... on your own. It takes the supernatural intervention of God to control your (immoral behavior). And God is glad to give that intervention if you will ask for His help.

page 190-B

- Purity is a beautiful thing. Its blessings exceed any brief pleasure that sexual immorality might offer.

Questions to Discuss:

1. Is purity an antiquated concept?
2. How can we help our children to embrace the Biblical standard of purity?

Share:

Have 1 or 2 people share a meaningful insight, scripture, or application from their personal study.

START: _____

Conclude Session

Wrap-Up

Hand out the Before Class Preparation Worksheet for Unit 15

Closing Prayer

END _____

Deceit: Showing a False Face

Before Class Preparation Worksheet

Unit 15

Day 1: Read pages 195-199: Introduction, Truth Decay

Choose one idea that you most want to remember:

From the scriptures included, which verse or phrase is most meaningful to you?

List one practical application you can make to your own life from this section of reading:

Day 2: Read pages 199-202: The Mask of Goodness, Buttering Up

Choose one idea that you most want to remember:

From the scriptures included, which verse or phrase is most meaningful to you?

List one practical application you can make to your own life from this section of reading:

Day 3: Read pages 202-205: Unfair Advantage, The Best Policy

Choose one idea that you most want to remember:

From the scriptures included, which verse or phrase is most meaningful to you?

List one practical application you can make to your own life from this section of reading:

Day 4: Work through the “Soul Prescription for Deceit” on pages 205-209.

Day 5: On the back of this page, write a short prayer to God concerning what you’ve learned and thought about.

Deceit: Showing a False Face

Unit 15

START: _____

Begin Session

Opening Remarks

Announcements

Opening Prayer

START: _____

Review Day 1

Pages 195-199: ■ Introduction

■ Truth Decay

Overview:

All forms of deception are sin. We all know people who “color” the truth – and may in fact do it ourselves. In the first part of this chapter on honesty, the authors begin with a basic form of deceit, lying.

The opposing virtue of deceit is honesty.

Points to Emphasize:

page 197-T

► We know how tempting it can be to shade the truth or present oneself in a false light for selfish reasons. Nevertheless, each of us must give up deception and learn the ways of honesty and integrity.

page 198-B

► Ephesians 4:25 – “Stop telling lies. Let us tell our neighbors the truth, for we are all parts of the same body.”

Questions to Discuss:

1. What is “absolute” truth? What types of interactions or situations require absolute truth?
2. How do you defend the truth, with your spouse, your kids, your employer, your church family, your community?

Share:

Have 1 or 2 people share a meaningful insight, scripture, or application from their personal study.

START: _____

Review Day 2

Pages 199-202: ■ The Mask of Goodness
■ Buttering Up

Overview:

As we move through this chapter, there is a discussion of hypocrisy and flattery as other forms of deception.

Points to Emphasize:

page 200-M

➤ Hypocrisy is an add-on sin. If you are struggling with any other sin ... and then you lie about it through words or pretense, you have added hypocrisy to your burden of guilt. And even worse, if you have deluded yourself into believing that you are a godly person despite your sins, then you have let hypocrisy join hands with its favorite partner, self-righteousness.

page 201-B

➤ The two-faced nature of deception is perhaps more evident in flattery than in any other form of deceit. Flattery is praising someone else untruthfully in the hope of gaining something by it ... Flattery always has an ulterior motive. Complimenting others is a neglected art form; we encourage praising the good in others. Flattery, however, goes beyond the honest compliment, using falsehood in an attempt to satisfy a selfish desire.

Questions to Discuss:

1. Why do you think God cares so much about honesty and the truth?
2. Why do we resort to deception as a way of communicating with others?

Share:

Have 1 or 2 people share a meaningful insight, scripture, or application from their personal study.

START: _____

Review Day 3

Pages 202-205: ■ Unfair Advantage
■ The Best Policy

Overview:

The authors go on to discuss fraud, which many of us would never involve ourselves in. However, Dr. Bright and Dr. Brandt point out that another form of fraud is cheating, and we are all presented with many ways to “cheat”. The chapter closes with a challenge to take the high road and embrace honesty at all times in order to leave a personal legacy of integrity.

Points to Emphasize:

page 204-B

➤ What legacy are we leaving? What reputation are we building for ourselves? Once act of deceit can make others distrust us. A pattern of deceit is hard to overcome. But with God’s help, any deceiver can begin to establish new patterns of honesty.

- We deceive because we are worried about what will happen to us if we choose to tell the truth. What we find, though, is that when we practice deceit we disappoint God, chip away at our own self-respect, and run the risk of a worse reaction from others when they find out the truth later. The proper response is to trust God to care for us as we honor His command to be truth tellers. There is, in fact, no peace to be had without truth.

Questions to Discuss:

1. Have you ever had someone confront you on some aspect of the truth of something you were sharing – either at work or at home? How did you respond? How should you respond?
2. Proverbs 25:18 says, “Telling lies about others is as harmful as hitting them with an ax, wounding them with a sword, or shooting them with a sharp arrow.” Do we really consider our words as weapons when we use them to deceive others? Have you ever considered the damage your untruthful words can cause?

Share:

Have 1 or 2 people share a meaningful insight, scripture, or application from their personal study.

START: _____

Conclude Session

Wrap-Up

Hand out the Before Class Preparation Worksheet for Unit 16

Closing Prayer

END: _____

Divisiveness: Disturbing the Peace

Before Class Preparation Worksheet

Unit 16

Day 1: Read pages 211-214: Introduction, The Monster of Strife

Choose one idea that you most want to remember:

From the scriptures included, which verse or phrase is most meaningful to you?

List one practical application you can make to your own life from this section of reading:

Day 2: Read pages 217-219: Brotherly Hate, Words as Weapons, Telling Tales

Choose one idea that you most want to remember:

From the scriptures included, which verse or phrase is most meaningful to you?

List one practical application you can make to your own life from this section of reading:

Day 3: Read pages 219-221: Destructive Speech, Learning to Get Along

Choose one idea that you most want to remember:

From the scriptures included, which verse or phrase is most meaningful to you?

List one practical application you can make to your own life from this section of reading:

Day 4: Work through the “Soul Prescription for Divisiveness” on pages 222-225.

Day 5: On the back of this page, write a short prayer to God concerning what you’ve learned and thought about.

Divisiveness: Disturbing the Peace

Unit 16

START: _____ **Begin Session**

Opening Remarks
Announcements
Opening Prayer

START: _____ **Review Day 1**

Pages 211-214: ■ Introduction
 ■ The Monster of Strife

Overview:

When we disagree with others we have a way of rationalizing our thoughts, opinions, and even behaviors. In the chapter we will discuss the sin of divisiveness and the ways in which it not only hurts us as individuals but also hurts our witness for Christ. This first section talks about strife.

The opposing virtue of divisiveness is harmony.

Points to Emphasize:

page 212-B

➤ Corinthians 1:10 – “I appeal to you, dear brothers and sister, by the authority of our Lord Jesus Christ, to live in harmony with each other. Let there be no division in the church. Rather, be of one mind, united in thought and purpose”.

page 213-B

➤ Some people seem to have a knack for contributing to a conflict so that strife grows and grows.... Such people have a problem that calls for more than learning better social behavior; it is really a sin habit we are talking about.

Questions to Discuss:

1. Is there a gracious way to “agree to disagree”?
2. When does disagreement turn into strife?

Share:

Have 1 or 2 people share a meaningful insight, scripture, or application from their personal study.

START: _____

Review Day 2

Pages 214-219: ■ Brotherly Hate
■ Words as Weapons
■ Telling Tales

Overview:

Even as Christians we are susceptible to using our words in unwise and unrighteous ways. This section specifically discusses gossip and slander.

Points to Emphasize:

page 215-B

➤ The unrighteous use of words plays a major role in our conflicts with others. Words can be tools to build up or they can be weapons to destroy.

page 215-B

➤ With words, we quarrel, argue, and dispute. With words, we gossip, slander, and smear. With words, we mock and ridicule, taunt and deride. With words, we criticize and judge and curse and condemn.

page 217-T

➤ We, as a society, love to know details from the lives of celebrities and other public figures – and the more intimate the detail, the better we like it. A similar dynamic is at work in our lives when we put gossip into circulation, or pass it on secondhand, and when we shoot out slander like a dart full of poison.

page 217-M

➤ *Gossip* is passing around tales of an intimate nature about another.... *Slander* is telling a deliberate falsehood about someone else that damages that person's reputation.... Both forms of talebearing are wrong.

Questions to Discuss:

1. What is it about gossip that is so intriguing?
2. What words can you think of that are opposite of each one of these words?

Quarrel	Ridicule
Argue	Taunt
Dispute	Deride
Gossip	Criticize
Slander	Judge
Smear	Curse
Mock	Condemn

Share:

Have 1 or 2 people share a meaningful insight, scripture, or application from their personal study.

START: _____

Review Day 3

Pages 219-221: ■ Destructive Speech
■ Learning to Get Along

Overview:

This chapter closes with a look at how we use our speech to tear others down, and a challenge to love each other in a way that truly reflects our relationship with Christ.

Points to Emphasize:

page 220-B to 220-T

➤ Criticism is a kind of speech that tears down; it is not an expression of love that wants to build the other up... If your criticism is tinged with self-righteousness, then you are likely guilty of judgmentalism. This is finding fault with others specifically about their spiritual or moral condition.

page 220-B

➤ If you see something that appears wrong in the spiritual life of another, do not presume that it is your job to flag the error for others. Instead, use it as a minder that you need to examine yourself for similar flaws. Learn not to create conflict in this way but to set an example of harmony.

page 221-M

➤ We are to be that body of people who overcome the human tendencies to fracture and fragment, such that others will look at us and know us by our love for one another... Such unity and harmony are not ours just by choosing them; they are possible only through supernatural enabling.

Questions to Discuss:

1. What exactly is “harmony”? What is required of the body of Christ in order for us to “live in harmony with each other” (Romans 12:16)?
2. It’s easy to point our fingers at other individuals, groups, and organizations (including other churches) and identify their divisiveness. It’s quite another to identify the personal places where we help perpetuate divisiveness. How can we hold one other more accountable in this area harmony with others?

Share:

Have 1 or 2 people share a meaningful insight, scripture, or application from their personal study.

START: _____

Conclude Session

Wrap-Up

Hand out the Before Class Preparation Worksheet for Unit 17

Closing Prayer

END: _____

Rebellion: Playing against Your Own Team

Unit 17

Before Class Preparation Worksheet

Day 1: Read pages 227-231: Introduction, Rebellion at Home

Choose one idea that you most want to remember:

From the scriptures included, which verse or phrase is most meaningful to you?

List one practical application you can make to your own life from this section of reading:

Day 2: Read pages 231-237: Rebellion at Church, Rebellion at Work, Rebellion in Society

Choose one idea that you most want to remember:

From the scriptures included, which verse or phrase is most meaningful to you?

List one practical application you can make to your own life from this section of reading:

Day 3: Read pages 237-240: Rebellion against God, Disobedience – When and How, Get Yourself in Line

Choose one idea that you most want to remember:

From the scriptures included, which verse or phrase is most meaningful to you?

List one practical application you can make to your own life from this section of reading:

Day 4: Work through the “Soul Prescription for Rebellion” on pages 240-245.

Day 5: On the back of this page, write a short prayer to God concerning what you’ve learned and thought about.

Rebellion: Playing against Your Own Team

Unit 17

START: _____

Begin Session

Opening Remarks
Announcements
Opening Prayer

START: _____

Review Day 1

Pages 227-231: ■ Introduction
 ■ Rebellion at Home

Overview:

The fact is that in life there are authority structures. In governments, in businesses, in churches, in homes, some people are leaders over others. In different situations, indeed, each of us is a follower and a leader. Except in certain limited situations, to reject or undermine properly instituted authority is to rebel against the order God has established in human society.

The opposing virtue of rebellion is obedience.

Points to Emphasize:

page 228-B to 229-T

➤ Some people seem to be rebels and dissenters by nature. Using either passive or aggressive tactics (maybe both), they seek to overthrow the authority that other have over them. Obeying rankles with the, and so they do it as little as possible. If this describes your behavior, you have a sin habit requiring repentance before God.

page 229-B to 230-T

➤ Even when we are grown up, we still have a responsibility to honor (though not necessarily obey) our parents. ...To refuse ... is to rebel against the order God has established between the generations of a family.

page 230-T

➤ Another type of rebellion that can upset the family order is a lack of submission by a wife to her husband. ...Though men and women are equal in importance, dignity, and ability, as well as in their relationship to God, He has granted to husbands the leadership in the home If there is discord between a husband and wife, the problem might be a failure in his leadership. But it also might be a failure in her followership.

Questions to Discuss:

1. What does it mean to “submit”?
2. Do you know any couples who truly model good submission/servant leadership in their relationship? How does it play out in their lives? What do you like/dislike about what you see?

Share:

Have 1 or 2 people share a meaningful insight, scripture, or application from their personal study.

START: _____

Review Day 2

- Pages 231-237: ■ Rebellion at Church
■ Rebellion at Work
■ Rebellion in Society

Overview:

Rebellion can do a lot of harm. In this section we are going to be addressing rebellion at church, at work, and in society.

Points to Emphasize:

page 232-T

- Certainly if church leaders are teaching false doctrine, we must try to correct their error. Or if we think they are making a strategic mistake, we may choose to raise the issue in an appropriate forum. But those are exceptions. The rule should be that all of us cooperate with those whom God has placed in positions of authority over us in the church. This rule is consistently taught in Scripture.

page 233-M

- Workplace insubordination comes in many forms ... and these are unacceptable behaviors for Christians.

page 235-B to 236-T

- Romans 13:1-7

Questions to Discuss:

1. What is the difference between rebellion and disagreement?
2. Throughout this chapter, the discussion of submission in marriage is based on proper leadership from the husband. How can women appropriately respond when their husband is not behaving in a godly manner?

Share:

Have 1 or 2 people share a meaningful insight, scripture, or application from their personal study.

START: _____

Review Day 3

- Pages 237-240: ■ Rebellion against God
■ Disobedience – When and How
■ Get Yourself in Line

Overview:

This chapter closes with a look rebellion against God as well as when and how to disobey within godly principles.

Points to Emphasize:

page 237-T

➤ Rebellion against human authority figures is always rebellion against God in an indirect sense because it means refusing to accept the order He has established. But there is also such a thing as direct rebellion against God. Some people refuse to obey His commands in Scripture or His individual leading in their lives.

page 238-B

➤ Certainly our normal response to authority should be obedience. But if a human leader is calling us to do something that would require us to disobey God, then we can and should refuse to obey the human leader. Actually, in such a case, we are still being obedient, only it is to the higher authority (God) when there is a conflict with a lesser authority (some human leader).

page 239-M

➤ Of course, there are poor ways and better ways to disobey when the need arises.

page 240-T

➤ In authority relationships, responsibility goes both ways. Possessing authority is never the same thing as having a license for tyranny. The misuse of power is as great a sin, perhaps greater, than rebellion.... Leaders submit by serving righteously, while followers submit by cooperating willingly. In this way order and love may coexist.

page 240-M

➤ The Greek word used for “submit” in Ephesians 5 came out of military experience. It referred to soldiers lining up in ranks under their officers. So when we are called to submit, we should get in line under the authority of our leaders. To do otherwise is to risk failure, even disaster, in the family or organization of which we are a part. For when the troops scatter, the war is lost.

Questions to Discuss:

1. What is the first step in healing rebellion in one’s life?
2. Where do you see good models of submission? Where do you see poor models of submission? How can we as Christians be agents of submission and obedience in our culture?

Share:

Have 1 or 2 people share a meaningful insight, scripture, or application from their personal study.

START: _____

Conclude Session

Wrap-Up

Hand out the Before Class Preparation Worksheet for Unit 18

Closing Prayer

END: _____

Irresponsibility: The Undisciplined Life

Unit 18

Before Class Preparation Worksheet

Day 1: Read pages 247-253: Introduction, A Lesson from the Ants, The Proper Place of Rest

Choose one idea that you most want to remember:

From the scriptures included, which verse or phrase is most meaningful to you?

List one practical application you can make to your own life from this section of reading:

Day 2: Read pages 253-256: A Working Savior, Sacred Work, Boss of Bosses

Choose one idea that you most want to remember:

From the scriptures included, which verse or phrase is most meaningful to you?

List one practical application you can make to your own life from this section of reading:

Day 3: Read pages 256-258: The Undependable, Get Going!

Choose one idea that you most want to remember:

From the scriptures included, which verse or phrase is most meaningful to you?

List one practical application you can make to your own life from this section of reading:

Day 4: Work through the “Soul Prescription for Irresponsibility” on pages 258-262.

Day 5: On the back of this page, write a short prayer to God concerning what you’ve learned and thought about.

Irresponsibility: The Undisciplined Life

Unit 18

START: _____ **Begin Session**

Opening Remarks
Announcements
Opening Prayer

START: _____ **Review Day 1**

Pages 247-253: ■ Introduction
■ A Lesson from the Ants
■ The Proper Place of Rest

Overview:

For most of us, irresponsibility is merely occasional, cropping up only when a particularly hard chore stands before us. Others, though, are chronically irresponsible. In this chapter we will look at several ways that irresponsibility creeps into our lives – and how we can deal with it in a godly way.

The opposing virtue of irresponsibility is diligence.

Points to Emphasize:

- page 247-B ➤ By nature, every one of us is inclined to take the path of least resistance.
- page 248-B ➤ ... a life of working hard at one's pursuits is a glorious adventure when it is done in tune with God's Spirit. It is the way we are meant to live.
- page 251-B ➤ ... the man or woman of God is expected to be diligent in all areas of life.
- page 253-T ➤ ... Sabbath rest is important ... we are talking about people who are idle when they should be working.

Questions to Discuss:

1. Why is it easy for us to justify our personal irresponsibility?
2. Do you regularly observe "Sabbath" rest in your life? What benefits do you experience because of it?

Share:

Have 1 or 2 people share a meaningful insight, scripture, or application from their personal study.

START: _____

Review Day 2

Pages 253-256: ■ A Working Savior
■ Sacred Work
■ Boss of Bosses

Overview:

As we move through this chapter, there is a discussion of hypocrisy and flattery as other forms of deception.

Points to Emphasize:

page 255-T

➤ Our work matters to God.

page 255-B

➤ We are to do our work as if we were working for the Lord rather than for people. That enables us to be consistent, diligent, reliable – and even happy – in our work.

Questions to Discuss:

1. This chapter presents a Biblical perspective for hard work. Had you ever considered a Biblical paradigm for working?
2. Does working hard really affect our witness as Christians?

Share:

Have 1 or 2 people share a meaningful insight, scripture, or application from their personal study.

START: _____

Review Day 3

Pages 257-264: ■ The Undependable
■ Get Going!

Overview:

If you have an ongoing problem with some type of irresponsibility, what we are not asking of you is a New Year's type of resolution to do better. We are not asking you to force yourself to do better on the job, at home, or wherever you tend to be irresponsible.... What we are asking of you is that you begin praying for help and committing yourself, in the grace of god, to fulfill the responsibilities He has laid on your heart. Seek the Lord, repent of your sin, and rely on the Spirit's empowering. Only in this way will you be able to acquire the virtue of diligence – and keep it.

Points to Emphasize:

page 257-T

➤ With the right perspective, your attitude can change from apathy to enthusiasm. And your sin habit of irresponsibility can be replaced by the

virtue of diligence.

page 258-B

- Some people seem to be negligent, careless, and inconsistent in every area of life... What's behind all this is usually an attitude problem, whether it goes by the name of apathy, boredom, or lethargy.

Questions to Discuss:

1. What motivates us to be responsible? What are some of the causes of us being irresponsible?
2. Who do you know that exemplifies diligence? What blessing comes from their life because of it?

Share:

Have 1 or 2 people share a meaningful insight, scripture, or application from their personal study.

START: _____

Conclude Session

Wrap-Up - As a group read aloud the "Conclusion" on pages 263-264 including having you or someone else pray the prayer on page 264.

END: _____

Dr. Henry Brandt's Biography

Henry was awarded his Ph.D. in Marriage and Family Relations at Cornell University in 1952, his Master of Arts Degree in Clinical Psychology from Wayne State University in 1949, and his Bachelor of Arts Degree in Psychology and Sociology from Houghton College in 1947.

After completing his doctorate at Cornell, Henry accepted what he thought would be his life's vocation—serving as Dean of Men at his Alma Mater, Houghton College. After two years, he realized God had other plans. Subsequently, Henry was invited to take a one-year sabbatical replacement position teaching speech at North American Baptist Seminary. The experience taught him far more than he had anticipated: it set the course of his career in public speaking.

In 1955, following his pivotal year at North American Baptist Seminary, Henry moved to Michigan. He worked for three years as a full-time staff member for the Clare Elizabeth Fund, not only to develop further some of the key teaching principles behind the Lamaze Program, but also to supervise twelve children's nurseries! Henry served for over a decade (1955-65) as a licensed psychologist in the area of individual, marriage, and family counseling in private practice in Michigan. During this time his call to ministry and his gifts in speaking led him to host a popular family radio program aired over the Moody Bible Institute's station WMBI from 1961 to 1971.

From the earliest days of Henry's vocation, he trained missionaries at home and ministered to them abroad. At his own expense, he reached out to countless men and women stationed in extreme and isolated locations. He was the first counseling psychologist to meet with the missionary wives after the Auca massacre in the Amazon.

Throughout Henry's career, he taught in a number of institutes, colleges, and seminaries, including the General Motors Institute, Houghton College, North American Baptist Seminary, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Christian Heritage College, and Palm Beach Atlantic University. He was instrumental in founding departments of psychology for both Christian Heritage College and Palm Beach Atlantic University.

Henry rightly has been honored with the title "The Father of Modern-Day Biblical Counseling." For decades he counseled individuals to evaluate their heart attitudes and behavior in the light of biblical teaching and to guide

them to a godly solution In 2003, the American Association of Christian Counselors honored Henry with their “Care Giver Award” for a lifetime of outstanding achievements.

Known as a communicator of communicators, Henry has an uncanny ability to understand his audience and to deliver just the right message. His use of Scripture, combined with his unique sense of humor, has reached the “inner person” of many to help facilitate genuine change. Over the decades, Henry’s wisdom and skill as a communicator enabled him to author numerous books with a focus on individual development and marriage and family living. His work, which has been translated into many languages, has circulated the globe.

Henry was married for forty-four years to Eva (d. 1979), with whom he had three children—Dick, Beth, and Suzanne. He has four grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

Henry was married to Marcy (d.1982) for three years. Then Henry married Jo in 1987. Jo has three children—Chris, Juliette, and Will (d.2001)—and four grandchildren.

Henry Brandt died on November 25, 2008 from complications related to Parkinson’s disease. He was 92.

For more information about Dr. Brandt go to:
www.HenryBrandtFoundation.org.

Henry Brandt Foundation

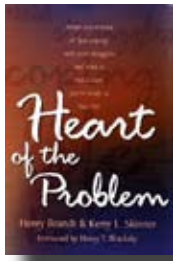
In his lifetime, Dr. Henry Brandt counseled and discipled thousands of Christians to teach them to address the heart of the problem and to embrace living God's way. Throughout his five decades of counseling, teaching, speaking and consulting, he emphasized key biblical concepts to deal with the sin problems at the root of life's difficulties. The Henry Brandt Foundation now ministers to individuals, churches, counselors, and pastors with these same life-changing truths, helping people to restore their relationships with God, heal relationships with others, and attain freedom from sin problems.

Henry Brandt Foundation provides insightful biblical counseling resources that strengthen individuals, families and the church. This is accomplished through:

- equipping pastors and counseling staff for more effective counseling,
- providing curriculum to small groups and church congregations for discipleship, and
- reaching out through the Internet to individuals around the world who are seeking healing. Many have few or no resources in their own countries, and are presented with the gospel for the first time.

For more information about Henry Brandt Foundation go to the website at www.HenryBrandtFoundation.org.

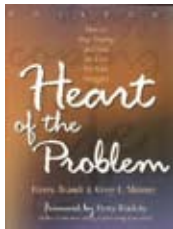
Henry Brandt Foundation Resources



The Heart of the Problem

By Henry Brandt, Kerry L. Skinner

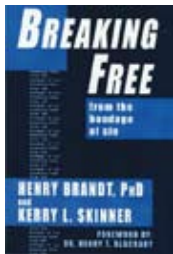
The Heart of the Problem: How to Stop Coping and Find the Cure for Your Struggle – This helpful work gives encouragement to everyone who has ever faced a situation they felt was insurmountable. Pride, anger, and denial separate people from the solutions and comfort they long for. By seeking God’s answer, even the most complex problems can be solved once and for all.



The Heart of the Problem Workbook

By Henry Brandt, Kerry L. Skinner

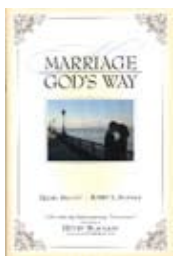
An interactive, Scripture-based workbook that shows readers how to fight sin effectively and live a more problem-free life.



Breaking Free From the Bondage of Sin

By Henry Brandt, Kerry L. Skinner

A human approach to dealing with sin does indeed relieve symptoms. But there is no human remedy for the problem of sin. The cure is out of this world. Only God can help. This book will help to illuminate the barriers (sins) that come between a person and the resources available from God through Jesus Christ.



Marriage God's Way

By Henry Brandt, Kerry L. Skinner

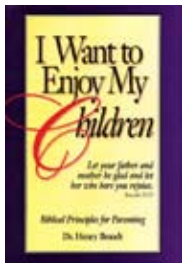
Tragic but true: couples who follow the world’s models of marriage end up in divorce. This problem is growing more and more prevalent even in the church. But *Marriage God’s Way* takes a fresh and frank new look at how to ease marital strife by considering marriage from a biblical perspective.



I Want to Enjoy My Children

By Henry Brandt, Kerry L. Skinner

If you didn't plan for them – or even if you did – having kids may threaten to spoil the fun of marriage. Henry Brandt and Kerry Skinner's book shows how to make parenting a fascinating, pleasant journey, wherever it may lead. This biblical, practical guide is based on the truth that parents need help from a resource outside themselves.



I Want to Enjoy My Children Workbook

By Henry Brandt, Kerry L. Skinner

Based on the book, *I Want to Enjoy My Children*, 11 chapters are divided into five daily lessons to help a parent focus on God's plan for parenting. To qualify as a Godly parent, you need to be a person of inner peace evidenced in the unexpected, unprepared for, unwanted twists and turns of life. This inner peace makes life a fascinating, pleasant journey, wherever it may lead.

Henry Brandt Foundation Websites



Listen to Henry's dynamic messages:
www.HenryBrandtFoundation.org



Find helpful insights arranged by need:
www.BiblicalCounselingInsights.com



Acknowledge sin as the root issue:
www.HeartoftheProblem.com



Experience freedom from sin habits:
www.SoulPrescription.com



Receive training for ministry:
www.InsightsforPastors.com



Discover resources for counseling:
www.InsightsforCounselors.com

