

GROUP DISCUSSION

Welcome everyone as they come.

Note that all discussion is to be confidential.

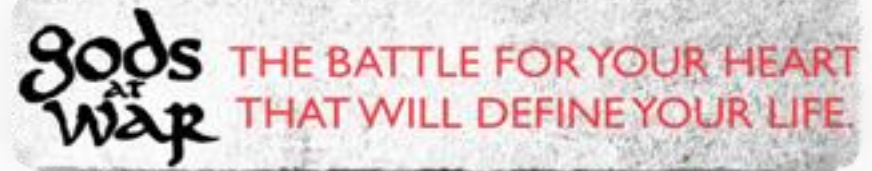
1. Review the daily reflection responses that members had an opportunity to go over in their personal time over this past week. Ask if anyone would like to share something God revealed to them during the week.

Watch the video and take notes below.

Discuss the following questions.

1. Paul Jones talked about learning to turn to food for comfort during his early childhood. Does anything about his story relate to you? When you think back to childhood, where did you turn for comfort?
2. What's your opinion? Is comfort a legitimate need? Is it wrong to find comfort in things like food, drink, sleep or sex?
3. One of the practices Paul used to break the hold comfort and pleasure had on him was to do uncomfortable things on purpose. Have you ever tried to do something hard to break a habit that had a hold on you? If so, what was it like? How did it turn out?

Pray for one another. Leave plenty of time for people to share requests and pray. List some reminders to help you pray this week.



WEEK 2: Pleasure

SERMON NOTES

Key Scripture: Romans 1:18-25

1. What we turn to before God, is and _____.
-Henry Blackaby
2. God is a _____ God. (Exodus 34:14)
3. The heart is _____ above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it? (Jeremiah 17:9)

The critical question for our generation--and for every generation--is this: If you could have heaven, with no sickness, and with all the friends you ever had on earth, and all the food you ever liked, and all the leisure activities you ever enjoyed, and all the natural beauties you ever saw, all the physical pleasures you ever tasted, and no human conflict or any natural disasters, could you be satisfied with heaven, if Christ was not there?

John Piper

APPLICATION: Take time this week to ask yourself these 7 questions to help identify idols in your life:

1. **What has left you most disappointed?**
2. **For what do you sacrifice time and money?**
3. **What do you worry about?**
4. **Where do you go for comfort?**
5. **What do you get angry about?**
6. **What do you dream of?**
7. **Whose encouragement means the most to you?**

DAILY REFLECTION & EXERCISE

You can read over these in 1 minute, but that will not help you in this war. Instead, invite God to speak to you each day as you reflect and journal on these devotions.

DAY 1 Ask yourself this question, and answer honestly:

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DAY 2 Identify where you learned to turn for comfort:

Where did you learn to turn for comfort during your childhood? Did you turn to food, a teddy bear, books, sports, music, being alone, friends, family, or something else?

DAY 3 Identify how you feel about where you turn for comfort:

In what ways do you believe that the ways you seek comfort have become idols, or at least distractions? Can you honestly, before God, say that you first turn to Him first for comfort?

DAY 4 Reflect on God's comfort:

Today's task is to consider how God has comforted you in the past when He has granted you the desires of your heart. The Apostle Paul claims that God comforts us in all our troubles (2 Cor. 1:4). When you have been stressed, upset, or overwhelmed, how have you experienced God bringing peace, consolation, or even pleasure to you?

DAY 5 Ask God for what you need:

Could it be that when it comes to comfort, "you do not have, because you do not ask God" (James 4:2)? Today, experiment with asking for what you need. Asking involves humility, a recognition that you must rely on God and others for the comfort you need.

DAY 6 Practice comforting others:

Today is an experiment in comforting others. Make it a point to keep an eye out for who is in distress of some kind. Resolve to offer some kind of comfort to someone you notice who appears to be struggling in some way.

DAY 7 What was it like?

What happened when you tried to comfort others? What was it like for you? How did others react?
