
Total Content Length:

9:23 for the Part 1 video

11:40 for the Part 2 video

38-46 minutes for the total class length.

Number of Discussions: 2

Session Layout:

Give Introduction

Play Session 1, part 1 video

Lead Discussion #1a

Play Session 1, part 2 video

Lead Discussion #1b

Please read the introductory sections prior to Lesson 1.



Lesson 1

Preparation

1. Read through the Leader's Guide introduction (see above).
2. Watch the Live Like You're Loved video (two parts, with a 15-second gap between the two for pausing the video).
3. Key points of the video:
 - **Big Thought:**
 - When you gain the heart knowledge that God loves you, you realize your value and worth, and it transforms the way you approach your life.
 - **Core Passage:**
 - John 3: 16: **"For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, that whosoever believes in Him may not perish, but have eternal life."**
 - **SAIL: Step In, Accept, Improve and Live It.**
 - **Step in:** Believe God's love for whosoever, and that "whosoever" includes you.
 - Cecil quotes from the lyrics of "You Say."
 - **Accept:** Claim your value and worth.
 - You can claim our God-given value and worth by counting your blessings, and by asking the Holy Spirit to show you your value and worth.
 - **Improve:** Discard your baggage.
 - Baggage that weighs us down and holds us back includes worry, guilt, anger and more. Cecil brings up an example from the movie "Up!"
 - **Live it:** Love your neighbor, since God loves you.
 - We are able to do this because God's love for us

can flow through to others.

- Other points:
 - Two symbols of God's sacrificial love are the manger and the cross.
 - God loves us with a waterfall of love, compassion, mercy and forgiveness.
 - In addition to recognizing God's love, you can claim your value and worth by counting your blessings and by asking the Holy Spirit to show you your value and worth.
 - "Head Knowledge" is what we think and believe in our heads, but may not have embedded in our souls nor put into full practice. "Heart Knowledge" is when we convert "Head Knowledge" into a personal belief that permeates our souls and causes real change in our lives.

Class Time

1. Watch the first part of the "Live Like You're Loved" video
(TARGET TIME: 9-10 minutes)

2. Discussion #1a
(TARGET TIME: 8-10 minutes)

MAIN DISCUSSION GOAL: Help the group understand the symbolism of God's love and discuss our feelings on God's love for us.

Questions:

1. Look at the banner picture for "Live Like You're Loved" on the paused video screen. What symbolism do you see in this picture, based on Cecil's description in the video so far?
 - **CECIL'S ANSWER:**
 - **Manger constellation:** God's love in coming to earth in the person of Jesus.
 - **Cross constellation:** God's love in the sacrifice of the person of Jesus, for our salvation.
 - **Waterfall:** God's powerful, overwhelming, reckless love, compassion, mercy and forgiveness for whosoever.
 - **Sailboat:** You!
 - **Tattered sails:** Our imperfections, but God loves us anyway as he sees our true value and worth.
2. Is it hard for us to believe that God loves every one of us? Why or why not?
 - **NOTE:** You may find a mixed reaction, from "Of course God loves us" to "It is hard to imagine that God loves us despite our sins and imperfections." As much as possible, let speak those who are hesitant to admit that they may not feel worthy of God's love.

- **NOTE:** Prepare for a possible discussion of God's judgment vs. God's grace. Acknowledge God's judgment while also reminding of God's grace and love. We don't want to diminish God's judgment, but in this series, we're trying to bolster the concept of God's love.

3. What did you think of Cecil's story of God's waterfall of love?

4. What does it mean to you to hear this verse from Hebrews 2:11? **Both the one who makes people holy and those who are made holy are of the same family. So Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers and sisters.**

**3. Watch the second part of the "Live Like You're Loved" video
(TARGET TIME: 11-12 minutes)**

**4. Discussion #1b
(TARGET TIME: 10-14 minutes)**

MAIN DISCUSSION GOAL: Participants should be able to recall and process the four SAIL steps. Question #3 is a crucial question, so be sure to ask this one. Finally, encourage the class to work through the assignment at the end of the handout; either distribute it on paper or send to them electronically.

Questions:

1. What does S-A-I-L stand for? What are the four steps of "Loved" S-A-I-L?

- ANSWER: Step In, Accept, Improve, Live It.
- ANSWER for four steps of "Loved" S-A-I-L:
 - S: Believe God's love for whosoever, and that "whosoever" includes you.
 - A: Claim your value and worth.
 - I: Discard your baggage.
 - L: Love your neighbor, since God loves you.

2. What struck you about this lesson?

3. Cecil described the "Improve" step as a crucial tipping point. To really live like you're loved means to live with freedom, security and confidence in who you are and whose you are. How do you get there, to really live like you're loved?

- **NOTE:** In this section, Cecil talked about discarding the baggage that weighs you down. So if the class is struggling with answers, remind them of this and ask what kind of baggage they have experienced, or what they have witnessed in others, that stops them from living securely and confidently.

- **CECIL'S ANSWER:** When we recognize and accept God's loving action and embed that into our hearts, we can make the changes to live securely, freely and confidently. We can better manage emotions or behaviors that stop us from living like we're loved. And it's not only for ourselves; we can reach out to love neighbors better when we experience God's love.

4. Cecil talked about turning head knowledge into heart knowledge. What does this mean to you?

HANDOUT: Live Like You're Loved (Week 1)

Key points of the video:

- Big Thought:
 - When you gain the heart knowledge that God loves you, you realize your value and worth, and it transforms the way you approach your life.
- Core Passage:
 - John 3: 16: **“For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, that whosoever believes in Him may not perish, but have eternal life.”**
- SAIL: Step In, Accept, Improve and Live It.
 - Step in: Believe God’s love for whosoever, and that “whosoever” includes you.
 - Cecil quotes from the lyrics of “You Say.”
 - Accept: Claim your value and worth.
 - You can claim our God-given value and worth by counting your blessings, and by asking the Holy Spirit to show you your value and worth.
 - Improve: Discard your baggage.
 - Baggage that weighs us down and holds us back includes worry, guilt, anger and more. Cecil brings up an example from the movie “Up!”
 - Live it: Love your neighbor, since God loves you.
 - We are able to do this because God’s love for us can flow through to others.
- Other points:
 - You may not feel especially loved until you can move our head knowledge of God’s love of humanity into a heart knowledge of God’s love for you personally.
 - Two symbols of God’s sacrificial love are the manger and the cross.
 - God loves us with a waterfall of love, compassion, mercy and forgiveness.
 - In addition to recognizing God’s love, you can claim your value and worth by counting your blessings and by asking the Holy Spirit to show you your value and worth.

Personal Exercise of Head Knowledge vs. Heart Knowledge:

Outside of class, begin the experience of transitioning from the head knowledge that God loves you to the heart knowledge that God loves you. Here are a few ideas for how to do this:

1. Suspend any disbelief that you have that God loves you. There’s a phrase, “fake it ‘til you make it,” that is somewhat negative, but may be useful. Sometimes we must do something before we feel something. If you search for that love feeling and come up empty, it’s discouraging. Instead, try for awhile to accept that God truly loves you, and act as if He does.
2. As a follow-up to the prior idea, think about and/or write down what would be different in your life if you truly embedded the knowledge in your heart that God loves you.
 - Would the negative comments and glances of others matter as much to you?
 - Would you get down on yourself less?
 - Would you be willing to take more chances?
 - Would you have a freer and lighter spirit?
 - Would you feel more secure in who you are and whose you are?
 - How would your identity change?
 - How would you approach each day differently?
3. Claim your value and worth. Some techniques:
 - Count your blessings – literally. Write them down! See how many you can come up with, then consider how they reveal the value and worth God places on you.
 - Pray – Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal your value and worth. It may not be a magical experience right away, but persistently pray and wait silently. Not just once, but multiple times, multiple days.
4. Imagine Jesus on the cross, in his infinite wisdom and prophecy, being able to visualize you individually while he suffered. Imagine what love it took for him to die for you personally.