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Family



SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR CONNECT GROUPS

3 & 4 SEP 2022

“HURT AND HEALING IN THE FAMILY” (PART 1)

GENESIS 1.27, 1 THESSALONIANS 5.23-24

Suggestions for Making the Most of your Group Time

1. Begin by reviewing the video of the sermon, preferably before you meet together (see <https://www.brmc.org.sg/services/sermons/>).
2. Read the Scripture passage together, before entering into discussion.
3. Spend time on both question components, namely:
 - a. Comprehension (*Who? What? When? Why? How?*);
 - b. Application / Transformation (*So what? What action should I take? Perspective should I adopt? Value should I uphold? Emotion should I embrace? Habit should I develop? Desire should I nurture? etc*)
4. Discuss as few or as many questions as best fits your group's current context and present stage in life.
5. Before ending your group session, allocate some time (15-20 min) to pray with and for one another.

3. The sermon and 1 Thess 5.23 describe how each human being is an interconnected and intertwined whole, which includes our fleshly physical body, our thoughts and emotions, as well as our capacity for spiritual connection. While bodily wounds are easily noticeable, wounds to the soul or spirit are typically less visible, but no less real.

Now, although we are made in the image of God (see Q2 above), this image has become marred by human sin and brokenness. Having been wounded by sin, we end up wounding others also.

- a. Are there emotional or spiritual wounds for which you need healing? Would you name these before God and ask for his restoration? If you feel comfortable, share with your Connect Group and bring it in prayer before God together. (**Note:** *As some of matters shared may be particularly sensitive, the CG should take utmost care to maintain confidentiality.*)
- b. Have you been at least partly responsible for causing wounds to another person's soul or spirit? In what ways have you sinned against others in causing these wounds? Would you confess these mistakes and misdoings unto God? Also, ask the Lord to be at work to bring about his divine healing.

Prayer Items

4. Pray for one another, that we would be empowered by God to live out the specific areas of application and transformation raised during the discussion time. Pray also for any needs that were mentioned.

Further Background Information

Made in the image of God

The **Image of God** (Latin: *imago Dei*) is a phrase found several times in the book of Genesis (Gen 1:7–27; 5:1–3; 9:6). This phrase:

- Is applied only to humans
- Distinguishes and elevates humankind from the animal and plant kingdoms.
- Indicates that humanity is, in some way, like God. The copy is like the original Creator in some way.
- Is found in the New Testament as part of the Christian's responsibility to imitate Christ, who is the image(r) of God *par excellence* (Colossians 1.15).

Note also that:

- To “image” God means to “reflect” God in creation.
- “Image” and “likeness” are largely synonymous.
- The *imago Dei* includes all human persons.
- The Fall has affected this image. While *imago Dei* remains present in every human person, the image has become marred by humanity's sin. Sin has caused misalignment and misdirection in every human heart. Having been wounded by sin, we end up wounding others also.
- This marred and distorted image stands in need of restoration, which is provided only through Jesus Christ, the perfect Man.

Imago Dei: Structural aspect

- A set of capacities which characterize human beings and reflects the divine being in some way, most commonly, our capacity for rational thought, volitional will, sentience, and communicative or linguistic ability.
- The Structural aspect does not stand alone. For not all these capacities are present among all human beings at all times (e.g. infants, mentally-ill persons, persons in vegetative states). These capacities are also not unique to human beings (e.g. higher primates also display intelligence, emotions, and communicative abilities).

Imago Dei: Functional aspect

- This is grounded in Gen 1:26–28. Human beings are portrayed as God's representatives, tasked with stewarding God's creation. This view means that human endeavour and enterprise has spiritual meaning—work is a spiritual exercise.
- Again, the Functional aspect cannot stand alone. For not all human beings have the capacity to undertake these tasks of stewardship at all times.

Imago Dei: Relational aspect

- This recognises that human beings relate to God, to one another, and to creation in a way that is unique among all creation. This aspect also recognises the inherent relationality within the Persons of the Holy Trinity, a relationality which is in some sense “imaged” in humanity.

- excerpted and adapted from *Lexham Bible Dictionary* (Lexham Press: 2016), and Marc Cortez, *Theological Anthropology: A Guide for the Perplexed* (Bloomsbury T&T Clark: 2010). A version of this info box was in the 2021 “Emotional Well-being” sermon series discussion guide.