

# Prayer Ministry Small Group Study Guide

## Lesson 10. Inner Healing

*Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. - James 4:8*

The goal of inner healing is to reconcile your active identity, who you are being, with your true identity, who God says you are. Where there is conflict between these two there is pain in the physical, emotional and spiritual realms. As your active identity matches your true identity you are no longer double-minded.

### Instruction

There are certain core elements of our personality that must be examined and brought into agreement with the truth. Our core values, paradigms, and strongholds all must be purified through our mind, will and emotions.

Inner healing is an ongoing process through which we interrogate our actions, feelings, beliefs, and worldview to eliminate double-mindedness and restore our heart to its intended condition.

### The Soul: Heart of Identity

*Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God. - Hebrews 3:12*

The soul is the very core of a person, made up of his mind, will and emotions. It was created as the human essence that interacted directly with the Holy Spirit. When these are acting in union, the person's mind is informed by the Spirit, his will desires the same things as the Spirit, and his emotions feel the way the Spirit feels.

Sin separates the Holy Spirit from the soul. This broken relationship leaves the soul to act on its own, which it was never designed to do. Without guidance from the Spirit, the soul becomes self-referential. Everyone has sinned; therefore everyone experiences this soulish influence. We are guided by what we think (mind), want (will), or feel (emotions). Each personality tends to rely on one of these three as a default mode for guidance.

Certain personality types, such as intellectuals and pragmatists, most often rely on the mind. They act according to what they think, believe, understand, consider, and reason. Conviction comes from having a great deal of information, or placing a lot of confidence in the mental ability of an authority. However, a self-referential mind can jump to wrong conclusions or misread information. This kind of person may be unable to act due to confusion, uncertainty, or a perceived lack of information.

The soulish person that relies on the mind rather than the Spirit is subject to procrastination, and may be easily deceived by fine sounding arguments or clever conclusions. Unfortunately, the devil specializes in using near-truth to deceive the self-guided.

Another personality type relies on the will. They act according to what they want. They choose and defend their actions based on inner conviction and often hold themselves and others to a high standard of responsibility. However, a self-referential will can latch on to

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the wrong choices. This kind of person may be paralyzed by a lack of conviction or unwillingness to take on obligations.

The soulish person that relies on the will rather than the Spirit is subject to stubbornness, legalism, and self-referential standards. Unfortunately, the devil is an accuser and heaps guilt on the self-guided, leading to the sin of pride.

Another personality type relies on emotions. They may be intuitive and expressive, acting by how they feel or expect to feel. They can be motivated by desire, or willing to act on a hunch or sense. However, self-referential emotions cause a person to personalize and internalize things. These people can be held back by fear, anger, shame, or apathy and emptiness. On the other hand they may be flooded with emotion, and unable to distinguish a direction to take.

The soulish person that relies on emotions rather than the Spirit is subject to depression, lust, or perfectionism. They can be trapped in historic emotional responses, triggered by current events, and projecting similar outcomes. Unfortunately, the devil is a master at dishing out shame and hopelessness.

### **Spiritual Living**

*But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do. - Galatians 5:16-17*

The key to inner healing is to listen to the Holy Spirit through an act of will. This places the soul in subjection to the spirit, rather than allow it to operate on its own.

We can begin this process by interrogating our actions and feelings. They are accurate measures of what our soul has been up to, and worthy of our attention. The result is to discover the belief that has informed those actions and feelings. The goal is to interrogate those beliefs to discover whether they are true, or need to be replaced with truth.

There is a required step after hearing the truth: it must be activated. Information can pass through our consciousness, sometimes with mental assent, and yet not become part of our frame of reference. This is often the case for people with a “head-heart split.” They know something to be true in their mind, but it does not feel true in their heart.

Obedience is the key ingredient to take a truth from believing to receiving. We are able to believe a truth by faith, but we receive that truth by application. In other words, the Spirit can testify to our spirit the truth of the Lord. It will change us only after it has been received by the soul through the portals of the mind, will and emotions.

Here are some activating questions in my repertoire. Confess the truth, and then ask: Does that make sense (mind)? Is that what you will choose (will)? How does that make you feel (emotions)? Rehearsing the truth through these portals is a key to holding the territory.

*Since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit, bringing holiness to completion in the fear of God. - 2 Corinthians 7:1*

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Walk by the Spirit in a daily discipline. The desire of the Spirit will override the desire of the flesh, and those daily choices and responses will cleanse your body and soul from the ways of the flesh, and bring your holiness to completion.

### **Practice Obedience**

*Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good. - Romans 12:21*

Make a habit of interrogating your frame of reference whenever an event or memory triggers an evil response within you. When you act out in an ungodly way, or experience an unwelcome emotion, it is because you are being someone other than who God says you are. A loving friend can help by gently pointing out the times when you are acting out of character.

Make a habit of daily examining the ways you think, feel and act. Over time you will confirm your true identity, but in the meanwhile you can discover the discrepancies that need to be exchanged for truth.

Practice prophetic proclamation. Capture the key characteristics of your God-given identity and write them on an index card. These are the values, gifts, strengths and interests that He put in you from the beginning. Use them to form a sentence that describes your true identity. Each morning, reaffirm that truth out loud. It is a great reminder for your heart, a reconditioning agent for your mind, an affirmation for your will, and a catalyst for feeling peace and joy.

For extra credit, share your prophetic proclamation statement with a loved one who is willing to verbally agree and act as witness as you overcome evil with good.

### **Tear Down Strongholds**

*We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ. - 2 Corinthians 10:5*

Anything that is contrary to the knowledge of God is a stronghold. The devil tempts us to establish these strongholds so he can overcome our defenses. Arguments are clever conclusions, rationalization and justification formed in the mind. Thoughts come from our frame of reference or paradigm and influence the things we want, either because of cultural upbringing or responses to life. These thoughts operate in our will. Lofty opinions are fueled by our emotions. They include personal preferences or convictions that we hold in high esteem.

### **Culture**

A person's worldview is heavily influenced by the culture in which he or she is raised. The traditions, heritage, lore, and expectations of that people group become the foundation of a worldview. In addition, the family of origin plays a role in embracing some parts of that mindset while downplaying other parts. For instance, the northern parts of the Americas and Europe tend to think digitally whereas the southern counterparts are more relational.

There is not a right or wrong between cultures for the most part. Differences provide variety in life and are not necessarily strongholds, unless they are contrary to the knowledge of God.

### **Core Values**

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Core values are guiding principles and passionate beliefs a person holds, even in adversity. These values make up the structure of the frame of reference by which truth and appropriateness are measured. For instance, one who values safety will gravitate toward predictability and away from risk. However, one who values adventure will respond quite differently.

Values are neither good nor bad, but express a preference or style that has far reaching impact on choices and emotional responses. Some clusters of values are common in certain cultural groups. Asians tend toward community, honor, and frugality, for example, but any individual Asian person may emphasize one value over another. By way of contrast, Northern Europeans tend toward industry, order, responsibility, and structure, yet there will be variety between individuals in that group as well.

Values are learned. The positive nature of a value is learned in love through community, family, or discipleship. For instance, industry is modeled by parents and affirmed in a growing child. Alternatively, the negative nature of a value is often learned in fear through trauma, abuse, or neglect. For example, a child raised in dangerous and unpredictable circumstances may place high value on safety and conformity as a means to reduce risk.

Whether a value is learned through love or fear, its persistence in the person's paradigm is directly related to the cost with which the value was gained. This is more significant in values learned by fear than those transferred through love. For example, punctuality is a personal and cultural value. If a person suffers a great loss, such as a job, for being late, he or she may prioritize that value above others, such as excellence or family.

A stronghold exists when a core value causes a person to act in a way that is contrary to the knowledge of God. As a value expresses the true nature of God it provides godly guidance. God is merciful, and the value of mercy expressed toward others is godly. On the other hand, the value of mercy becomes morbidly self-referential when it is expressed inward, when its whole focus is on self.

Inner healing may involve redeeming a value from its negative expression into its godly nature. God can renew a person's mind so the object of mercy is changed from self to others, for instance.

Another aspect of inner healing may be the exchange of one value for another. For example, a person may have placed fear as his highest value because of trauma. He has learned to guard his heart with fear, but can exchange that fear for love through mind renewal (1 John 4:18).

### **Character Traits**

The defining aspects of a personality can be described in terms of character traits, in fact a person may be described by one or more of these characteristics. They are core values or cultural influences that have been adopted by the person to such an extent that future action and reaction can be predicted based on the pattern. There is a cliché that a person's greatest strength may become their greatest weakness. That is because each trait has a redeemed or unredeemed expression.

**Faith** - This great strength causes a person to trust God in all circumstances, to believe the truth without evidence, and to remain steadfast to a position despite great opposition or obstacles. The redeemed side of faith is assertive, bold, confident, decisive, dependable, optimistic, patient, persistent, reliable, steady, and

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trustworthy. The unredeemed side of this character trait is stubbornness, belligerence, bossy, dominating, headstrong, opinionated, secretive, and self-justification.

**Leadership** - This great strength allows a person to guide others toward a goal and encourages them to participate at their highest and most effective level. The redeemed side of leadership is assertive, attentive, confident, considerate, decisive, disciplined, helpful, persistent, selfless, and venturesome. The unredeemed side of this character trait is attention-seeking, bossy, cold-hearted, dominating, impatience, insensitive, manipulative, self-importance and self-seeking.

**Discernment** - This great strength helps a person know right from wrong and good from evil. It is a companion gift to leadership and mercy. The redeemed side of discernment is analytical, careful, confident, decisive, lawful, rational, sensitive, spiritual and straight-forward. The unredeemed side of this character trait is abrasiveness, argumentative, bitter, cold-hearted, critical, discriminatory, distrustful, gossiping, hostile, impatience, insensitive, intolerant, judgmental, opinionated and vindictive.

**Administration** - This great strength organizes people and things to reduce risk, maximize productivity, and keep things operating smoothly. The redeemed side of administration is attentive, careful, controlled, disciplined, industrious, lawful, organized, persistent, realistic, reliable and thoughtful. The unredeemed side of this character trait is bossy, compulsive, detached, humorless, obsessed, over-cautious, perfectionism, procedural, controlling, unfriendly and white-knuckled.

**Creativity** - This great strength brings new ideas and opportunities to light and discovers solutions to problems. The redeemed side of creativity is boldness, confidence, cooperative, flexible, helpful, involved, open-minded, optimistic, playful, venturesome and willing. The unredeemed side of this character trait is attention-seeking, careless, disorganized, dramatic, egocentric, flightiness, forgetfulness, grandiose, impatience, impulsive, reckless, undependable, undisciplined, unrealistic and unstable.

**Mercy** - This great strength moves the heart with compassion and creates opportunity to demonstrate love to one another. The redeemed side of mercy is attentive, concerned, considerate, forgiving, generous, gentle, helpful, kind, sensitive, serene, social, thoughtful and warm. The unredeemed side of this character trait is codependent, enabling, indulgent, overly-emotional, pity, submissive, unrealistic, vague, depressive and victimhood.

**Giving** - This great strength directs resources to a place of need and provides the materials necessary for accomplishing a mission. The redeemed side of giving is attentive, cheerful, concerned, considerate, content, cooperative, dependable, friendly, generous, helpful, humble, industrious, involved, loving, selfless, self-sufficient, sociable, thoughtful and venturesome. The unredeemed side of this character trait is arrogance, attention-seeking, braggart, dominating, gluttony, greed, indulgent, leverage, lust, manipulation, materialism, self-seeking, snobbery and vanity.

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**Confidence** - The redeemed side of confidence is assertive, decisive, faith, leadership, outgoing, optimistic and persistent. The unredeemed side is arrogance, egocentric, lying, preoccupation, self-importance and unrealistic.

**Caution** - The redeemed side of caution is similar to administration with reliable, modest, and lawful aspects. The unredeemed side of caution is indecision, procrastination, anxiety and fear.

### Opinions and Preferences

“Variety is the very spice of life, that gives it all its flavor,” wrote William Cowper in 1785. Opinions are a personal expression of ones values and culture. Unless they are raised against the knowledge of God, they are neither good nor bad. Differing opinions and preferences give variety and flavoring to a community of any size. A lofty opinion is one that competes against God and fuels the sin of pride. It could be an untruth, lie, or assumption that contrasts with God’s opinion. It can become a stronghold when one refuses to bow their opinion in favor of God.

An opinion can also be considered lofty when it is raised against other people. Anyone that forces their opinion upon another demonstrates a lack of humility and unwillingness to love.

Do not condemn others for their differing opinion, for that is judgment. Do not force your paradigm on other, for that is abuse. Rather, share your culture, values, and opinions as flavoring for the spice of life. Celebrate the many facets of God as they are reflected through others.

### Take Thoughts Captive

*Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good. - Romans 12:21*

Arguments, thoughts, and opinions fall into one of three categories. There are redeemed values and beliefs that bring praise to God. There are unredeemed values and beliefs which portray the dark side and attempt to discredit God. There are lies and evil deception that rebels against God and His truth. The last of these categories is the domain of the father of lies, the devil.

Arrest the thought to interrogate it. Does this bring praise to God? Is it expressing a redeemed value or trait? Does this thought discredit God’s character? Is it expressing an unredeemed value or trait? If it is an argument or lofty opinion, ask what is its redeemed nature?

Confess the belief. Ask Christ to reveal the truth about the redeemed quality of that belief. Accept the truth by listening, obeying, and putting His words into practice. Then confess the truth into your mind, will and emotions by stating it aloud.

Tear down strongholds, which are persistent thoughts, arguments, and opinions. Confess the belief. Ask Christ to reveal the origin of this thought and how you came to believe it to be true. Then ask Him for the eternal truth about that belief. Confess that you release the captive thought in exchange for the truth.

Make a spiritual discipline of this process. Examine your frame of reference for strongholds. Take each thought captive, even though it feels like a familiar truth. Discover the redeemed side of your character, and prophetically proclaim that true identity into existence.

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## Lesson 10: Inner Healing Exercise

Take a moment for self-reflection. What is your soul's default setting for guiding your life? Circle your answer in these statements.

My soul is most concerned with SELF-PROTECTION or SELF-SACRIFICE.

My default operating system is set to my MIND, WILL, or EMOTIONS.

Under pressure my operating system is MIND, WILL, or EMOTIONS.

Under what conditions are you tempted the most to act from your soul rather than walk by the Spirit? Be as specific as possible.

### Core Values Assignment

Values are those underlying assumptions and core convictions that shape our actions and decisions. They are usually born out of the lessons we learn and then welded into our ideology through times of difficulty and testing. While some have mistaken beliefs for values, actual values will always be observed in behavior. They are plainly seen in your checkbook, calendar, conversation, day dreams, and activities. Your core values represent your unique wiring, the unique ways God has shaped your views and approaches on life. Knowing your core values helps you identify thoughts, arguments and opinions so they can be taken captive and made obedient to Christ.

Identify 6 - 8 core values and note the reason you hold that value, either from a lesson learned or conviction developed.

Value	Lesson / Conviction
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	

Do you tend to operate in these values in a redeemed or unredeemed ways?

How can you change the way you use these values to redeem them?

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### Examples of values

Accomplishment	Family	Marriage	Self-esteem
Affirmation	Forgiveness	Making Money	Self-expression
Ambition	Forward-looking	Mentoring	Sensitivity
Autonomy	Freedom	Obedience	Servanthood
Beauty	Frugality	Orderliness	Service
Being in Control	Fulfillment	Patience	Sexual Fulfillment
Caution	Fun	Peace	Silence
Career	Gentleness	Perfection	Sincerity
Collaboration	Genuineness	Performance	Solitude
Community	Good taste	Persistence	Spiritual Growth
Compassion	Growth	Personal Power	Stability
Competence	Hard Work	Physical Vitality	Success
Competition	Health	Productivity	Temperance
Consistency with	Honesty	Protection	Tolerance
Biblical Teaching	Humility	Purity	Tongue Control
Creativity	Humor	Quality	Tranquility
Determination	Impacting People	Recognition	Trust
Diligence	Independence	Relaxation	Truth
Efficiency	Influence	Respect for People	Winning
Elegance	Integrity	Respect for Life	Worship
Encouragement	Intelligence	Respect for the	
Enlightenment	Joy	Environment	
Excellence	Lack of Pretense	Risk Taking	
Faithfulness	Love	Security	

### Sharing: Inner Healing

In your small group affirm each other with the primary character trait you see in him or her. Use a simple phrase such as: “John, I see faith in you.” Each one should take a turn to affirm “John” until all have shared. Then move to the next person.

#### Character Traits:

Faith, Leadership, Discernment, Administration, Creativity, Mercy, Giving, Confidence, Caution.

- How did it feel to have others affirm your character traits?
- How accurately did your group describe you?
- What surprised you in this exercise?
- How have you used your primary character trait in unredeemed way?
- What circumstances or conditions help you to act in redeemed traits?
- How can you speak life into your children (spiritual children) as they use their God-given character traits?
- What will help you remember to make prophetic proclamations to others?

### Caring: Inner Healing

Confess your weakness and mistakes to one another. Cover the confessions with prayer and bless each other in their true identity. Consider how this time can be commemorated.