



*RESTORED  
& RENEWED*  
CHRIST THROUGH  
THE EYES OF THE  
*PROPHETS*

*...but let  
justice  
roll down  
like waters...*

# *RESTORED & RENEWED*

## CHRIST THROUGH THE EYES OF THE

# *PROPHETS*

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\*Dates correspond to the Sunday the week begins

LESSON 1: MAY 31, 2020

# *Ruth 1*

CHRIST IN THE MINOR PROPHETS

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*LIVING UNDER THE WORD*

Sermon Notes

# LIVING WITH ONE ANOTHER RENEW GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Reflect on the sermon. What resonated with you? What questions do you have? What would you like to know more about?

1. Read through the book of Ruth this week.
2. Make a list of what you have learned about God in this passage. Write what you have learned about his attributes, his commands, his promises, his view of relationships.
3. In light of what the people/the prophet in this passage did, how does that change your feelings about them? About God? What might they have been feeling as they faced the circumstances around them?

4. How does what you've learned in this passage attack your idols? Use the **Idols List** in the appendix to spur your thinking on this.

5. Describe the restorative hope that is found in this passage. How does this hope of restoration bring comfort to your soul?

6. Fill in the blank: The truth that God is \_\_\_\_\_ reminds me that I \_\_\_\_\_.

## *LIVING OUT OUR FAITH*

7. How will I live out my faith in light of the truths I have learned in this passage? How does this change my relationships?

## PRAYER

Reflect on what you have learned in the book of Ruth this week. In what ways does Ruth show her dependence on God? How do you see her giving up control of her life and trusting God to care for her?

Ask God to give you this kind of faith. As you pray, consider praying the words of these verses.

- I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God. Ephesians 3:16-19
- Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, for you are receiving the end result of your faith, the salvation of your souls. 1 Peter 1:8-9
- Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see. Hebrews 11:1

LESSON 2: JUNE 7, 2020

# *Ruth 2*

CHRIST IN THE MINOR PROPHETS

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*LIVING UNDER THE WORD*

Sermon Notes

# LIVING WITH ONE ANOTHER RENEW GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Reflect on the sermon. What resonated with you? What questions do you have? What would you like to know more about?

1. Read through the book of Ruth this week.
2. Make a list of what you have learned about God in this passage. Write what you have learned about his attributes, his commands, his promises, his view of relationships.
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6. Fill in the blank: The truth that God is \_\_\_\_\_ reminds me that I \_\_\_\_\_.

## *LIVING OUT OUR FAITH*

7. How will I live out my faith in light of the truths I have learned in this passage? How does this change my relationships?

## PRAYER

In Ruth Chapter 1, Naomi experienced much loss. In verse 19, we learn that because of her emptiness, pain, and bitterness, her name has been changed to Mara, or bitter, "the Lord has dealt bitterly with me". Naomi honestly laments; she pleads with God for help while in the midst of very real pain. She is overcome by chaos, brokenness, suffering, and death of loved ones.

Like Naomi, the psalmists acknowledge their brokenness and pain as they lament before God.

As you talk to God about the loss, brokenness, and pain that you have experienced or may currently be experiencing, perhaps one of these psalms will give you words to express your lament. Take some time to write your own psalm of lament.

- Psalm 13

- Psalm 42

- Psalm 43

- Psalm 88

My psalm of lament:

LESSON 3: JUNE 14, 2020

# *Ruth 3-4*

CHRIST IN THE MINOR PROPHETS

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*LIVING UNDER THE WORD*

Sermon Notes

# LIVING WITH ONE ANOTHER RENEW GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Reflect on the sermon. What resonated with you? What questions do you have? What would you like to know more about?

1. Read through the book of Ruth this week.
2. Make a list of what you have learned about God in this passage. Write what you have learned about his attributes, his commands, his promises, his view of relationships.
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## *LIVING OUT OUR FAITH*

7. How will I live out my faith in light of the truths I have learned in this passage? How does this change my relationships?

## PRAYER

Redemption! Boaz is Ruth's kinsman redeemer. Ruth found herself in a place where she needed a protector, a savior; someone who would rescue her and care for her—a kinsman redeemer. Boaz was qualified, willing and able to redeem Ruth. Like Boaz was to Ruth, Christ is our kinsman redeemer. Read these passages to see what Jesus has done for us and why he is qualified to be our kinsman redeemer.

- John 1:14

- Hebrews 2:14

- 1 Peter 1:18-19

- Ephesians 1:7

- Romans 3:24-26

As you pray today, pray the words of Psalm 43. Ask God to give you a renewed understanding of redemption.

LESSON 4: JUNE 21, 2020

# *Jonah 1:1-3*

CHRIST IN THE MINOR PROPHETS

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*LIVING UNDER THE WORD*

Sermon Notes

## LIVING WITH ONE ANOTHER RENEW GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Reflect on the sermon. What resonated with you? What questions do you have? What would you like to know more about?

1. Read through the book of Jonah this week.
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## *LIVING OUT OUR FAITH*

7. How will I live out my faith in light of the truths I have learned in this passage? How does this change my relationships?

## PRAYER

God had a job for Jonah—to arise and go to Ninevah. But Jonah wasn't interested in following God's plan. He turned away and tried to flee from the presence of God.

Jonah was determined not to enter the evil city of Ninevah. He had judged the people there and had no intention of being used by God to offer them hope of salvation.

In Romans 2:3-4, Paul cautions the Romans that we all face God's judgement. No one will escape. It is God's kindness that leads us to repentance.

<sup>3</sup>So when you, a mere human being, pass judgment on them and yet do the same things, do you think you will escape God's judgment? <sup>4</sup>Or do you show contempt for the riches of his kindness, forbearance and patience, not realizing that God's kindness is intended to lead you to repentance?

Have you ignored, refused to listen to, or run away from something God has called you to do? Are you judging another unworthy to hear the hope of the gospel? Ask the Spirit to reveal your sin to you and lead you to repentance. Name your sin. Confess it. Turn away from it and turn toward God. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide you as you move out in obedience and faith.

LESSON 5: JUNE 28, 2020

# *Jonah 1:4-16*

CHRIST IN THE MINOR PROPHETS

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*LIVING UNDER THE WORD*

Sermon Notes

# LIVING WITH ONE ANOTHER RENEW GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Reflect on the sermon. What resonated with you? What questions do you have? What would you like to know more about?

1. Read through the book of Jonah this week.
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## *LIVING OUT OUR FAITH*

7. How will I live out my faith in light of the truths I have learned in this passage? How does this change my relationships?

## PRAYER

Have you ever been afraid? Really afraid? What is your first response to fear? To whom do you cry out? When the storm threatened the safety of the sailors on the ship, they cried out to their gods who were powerless to save them.

Unlike the useless and powerless gods of the men on the ship, our God is omnipotent, all powerful. He is able to save.

The Lord is my light and salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? Psalm 27:1

Before you pray today, make a list of things that cause you to fear. Pray through this list, naming your fears and giving them to God. Pray believing this truth:

I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Romans 8:38-39

LESSON 6: JULY 5, 2020

# *Jonah 3:1-10*

CHRIST IN THE MINOR PROPHETS

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*LIVING UNDER THE WORD*

Sermon Notes

## LIVING WITH ONE ANOTHER RENEW GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Reflect on the sermon. What resonated with you? What questions do you have? What would you like to know more about?

1. Read through the book of Jonah this week.
2. Make a list of what you have learned about God in this passage. Write what you have learned about his attributes, his commands, his promises, his view of relationships.
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## *LIVING OUT OUR FAITH*

7. How will I live out my faith in light of the truths I have learned in this passage? How does this change my relationships?

## PRAYER

When the people of Ninevah were confronted with their sin as they heard the message of judgment that Jonah proclaimed, they turned from their sin.

And the people of Ninevah believed God. They called for a fast and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them to the least of them. Jonah 3:5

What is your response when confronted with sin? Do you deny your sin or refuse to acknowledge it? Or do you respond with repentance as the Holy Spirit convicts you? Do you accept the truth about yourself and in humility turn to Jesus for forgiveness?

When they heard this, they came under deep conviction and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles: "Brothers, what must we do?" Acts 2:37.

Ask the Holy Spirit to show you your sin and ask him to lead you to repentance. Rejoice in the finished work of Christ on the cross.

LESSON 7: JULY 12, 2020

# *Jonah 4:1-11*

CHRIST IN THE MINOR PROPHETS

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*LIVING UNDER THE WORD*

Sermon Notes

# LIVING WITH ONE ANOTHER RENEW GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Reflect on the sermon. What resonated with you? What questions do you have? What would you like to know more about?

1. Read through the book of Jonah this week.
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## *LIVING OUT OUR FAITH*

7. How will I live out my faith in light of the truths I have learned in this passage? How does this change my relationships?

# PRAYER

Write down the names of some people in your life who don't yet know Jesus. Pray for them now.

Praying scripture is an effective way to pray for others. Here are some scriptures that will guide you as you pray.

- "Father, Your Word says that You desire all people to be saved and come into the knowledge of the truth, so I bring \_\_\_\_\_ before You this day. 2 Peter 3:9
- "Father. I ask that You send just the right people to share the good news of the gospel in such a way that \_\_\_\_\_ will listen and understand it. As the truth is ministered, would your Holy Spirit open \_\_\_\_\_'s eyes to the gospel, releasing him/her from the snare of the devil and making Jesus Lord of his/her life. 2 Timothy 2:24-26
- Father, Jesus says, "Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent." Would you please open the eyes of \_\_\_\_\_'s heart to see his/her need for Jesus, understanding that Jesus is the only way to eternal salvation? John 17:3
- Lord, give me a heart that desires to tell \_\_\_\_\_ about Jesus. I ask that you would give me opportunities to minister and serve \_\_\_\_\_ and those who don't yet know you. Make me and other believers a light that shines before \_\_\_\_\_, so that he/she may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven. (Matthew 5:16).

LESSON 8: JULY 19, 2020

# *Amos 9:11-15*

CHRIST IN THE MINOR PROPHETS

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*LIVING UNDER THE WORD*

Sermon Notes

## LIVING WITH ONE ANOTHER RENEW GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Reflect on the sermon. What resonated with you? What questions do you have? What would you like to know more about?

1. Read through the book of Amos this week.
2. Make a list of what you have learned about God in this passage. Write what you have learned about his attributes, his commands, his promises, his view of relationships.
3. In light of what the people/the prophet in this passage did, how does that change your feelings about them? About God? What might they have been feeling as they faced the circumstances around them?

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## *LIVING OUT OUR FAITH*

7. How will I live out my faith in light of the truths I have learned in this passage? How does this change my relationships?

## PRAYER

When you think of restoration, what comes to your mind?

Are there things in your life that you long to be restored? Relationships? Hopes? Dreams?

Go to God with these longings and share your heart with him. One day God will make all things new. This is the hope of the gospel.

And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast. To him be the power for ever and ever. Amen. 1 Peter 5:10-11

Behold, I am doing a new thing;  
now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?  
I will make a way in the wilderness  
and rivers in the desert. Isaiah 43:19 ESV

And he who was seated on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." Also he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true." Revelation 21:5 ESV

LESSON 9: JULY 19, 2020

# *Hosea 1-3*

CHRIST IN THE MINOR PROPHETS

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*LIVING UNDER THE WORD*

Sermon Notes

# LIVING WITH ONE ANOTHER RENEW GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Reflect on the sermon. What resonated with you? What questions do you have? What would you like to know more about?

1. Read through the book of Hosea this week.
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## *LIVING OUT OUR FAITH*

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## PRAYER

The relationship that Hosea has with his wife, Gomer, is a parable relating to the Lord's relationship with Israel. Just as Gomer betrayed Hosea, we constantly betray God. Read the verses below and take time to lament that our sin has and continues to turn us away from God.

- Isaiah 59:1-2

- Romans 3:23

- Isaiah 53:6

Even though God is just, he had mercy on Israel in Hosea. Even though we are constantly betraying God, he had mercy on us by sending his Son, so that our relationship with him can be restored. Read the verses below and take time to thank the Lord for his mercy.

- 1 John 1:9

- 1 Peter 1:3

- Psalm 103

LESSON 10: AUGUST 2, 2020

# *Micah* 6:6-8

CHRIST IN THE MINOR PROPHETS

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*LIVING UNDER THE WORD*

Sermon Notes

## LIVING WITH ONE ANOTHER RENEW GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Reflect on the sermon. What resonated with you? What questions do you have? What would you like to know more about?

1. Read through the book of Micah this week.
2. Make a list of what you have learned about God in this passage. Write what you have learned about his attributes, his commands, his promises, his view of relationships.
3. In light of what the people/the prophet in this passage did, how does that change your feelings about them? About God? What might they have been feeling as they faced the circumstances around them?

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## *LIVING OUT OUR FAITH*

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## PRAYER

The Lord does not require any works from us for us to enter heaven. Our repentance and acceptance of the death and resurrection of the Son of God is our way, not works. Nothing we can do allows us to enter heaven, only what Jesus did. We are called to repent of how we are constantly turning away from the Lord. While some sins we are aware of, others we are not.

Pray that the Lord would reveal your sins to you. Take time to confess and repent of your sins, and ask God for help and for strength to turn away from sin.

In Micah 6:8, we are called to justice, kindness, and humility. What are some practical ways to do this? Pray that God will help you to live out these attributes daily.

LESSON 11: AUGUST 9, 2020

# *Zephaniah 3:14-20*

CHRIST IN THE MINOR PROPHETS

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*LIVING UNDER THE WORD*

Sermon Notes

# LIVING WITH ONE ANOTHER RENEW GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Reflect on the sermon. What resonated with you? What questions do you have? What would you like to know more about?

1. Read through the book of Zephaniah this week.
2. Make a list of what you have learned about God in this passage. Write what you have learned about his attributes, his commands, his promises, his view of relationships.
3. In light of what the people/the prophet in this passage did, how does that change your feelings about them? About God? What might they have been feeling as they faced the circumstances around them?

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## *LIVING OUT OUR FAITH*

7. How will I live out my faith in light of the truths I have learned in this passage? How does this change my relationships?

## PRAYER

Death is inevitable and Judgement Day is coming. Praise Jesus that we can live in hope for what is to come after death! While we can rejoice, there are many who don't know the Lord.

Think about people in your life that do not call Jesus their Lord and Savior. Pray that their hearts would be softened and that they would be saved.

Reach out to other Christians you know this week and ask if they know people who are not saved and pray for those people together.

There are many nations where Christians are scarce and most people are not saved. Pray for those nations and for ways for the gospel to be heard and known to multiply.

LESSON 12: AUGUST 16, 2020

# *Habakkuk 1:5, 2:4b, 3:17-19*

CHRIST IN THE MINOR PROPHETS

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LIVING UNDER THE WORD

Sermon Notes

## LIVING WITH ONE ANOTHER RENEW GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Reflect on the sermon. What resonated with you? What questions do you have? What would you like to know more about?

1. Read through the book of Habakkuk this week.
2. Make a list of what you have learned about God in this passage. Write what you have learned about his attributes, his commands, his promises, his view of relationships.
3. In light of what the people/the prophet in this passage did, how does that change your feelings about them? About God? What might they have been feeling as they faced the circumstances around them?

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## *LIVING OUT OUR FAITH*

7. How will I live out my faith in light of the truths I have learned in this passage? How does this change my relationships?

## PRAYER

Yet I will rejoice in the Lord; I will take joy in the God of my salvation. Habakkuk 3:18

How are you taking joy in the God of your salvation?

Take time to:

- Reflect on how you have seen God working in your life recently. Thank and praise him for what He is doing in your life.
- Reflect on God's beautiful creation of the earth. See God's goodness from the world he gave us to live in and thank him for it.
- Reflect on the people created in God's image surrounding you and thank him for those people and the relationships you have with them.

LESSON 13: AUGUST 23, 2020

# *Haggai 1-2*

CHRIST IN THE MINOR PROPHETS

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*LIVING UNDER THE WORD*

Sermon Notes

# LIVING WITH ONE ANOTHER RENEW GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Reflect on the sermon. What resonated with you? What questions do you have? What would you like to know more about?

1. Read through the book of Haggai this week.
2. Make a list of what you have learned about God in this passage. Write what you have learned about his attributes, his commands, his promises, his view of relationships.
3. In light of what the people/the prophet in this passage did, how does that change your feelings about them? About God? What might they have been feeling as they faced the circumstances around them?

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## *LIVING OUT OUR FAITH*

7. How will I live out my faith in light of the truths I have learned in this passage? How does this change my relationships?

## PRAYER

For years, God's people were discouraged from rebuilding the temple in Jerusalem. Have you been disheartened by something recently? Has this situation drawn you away from or closer to God? Is there a way to "rebuild" this part of your life?

Reflect on current or past ways you have felt discouraged. Thankfully, we do not have to rely on our own strength to deal with difficult situations. Ask God for strength and guidance for healing and "rebuilding".

LESSON 14: AUGUST 30, 2020

# *Zechariah 9:9–10, 10*

CHRIST IN THE MINOR PROPHETS

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*LIVING UNDER THE WORD*

Sermon Notes

## LIVING WITH ONE ANOTHER RENEW GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Reflect on the sermon. What resonated with you? What questions do you have? What would you like to know more about?

1. Read through the book of Zechariah this week.
2. Make a list of what you have learned about God in this passage. Write what you have learned about his attributes, his commands, his promises, his view of relationships.
3. In light of what the people/the prophet in this passage did, how does that change your feelings about them? About God? What might they have been feeling as they faced the circumstances around them?

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## *LIVING OUT OUR FAITH*

7. How will I live out my faith in light of the truths I have learned in this passage? How does this change my relationships?

## PRAYER

In the book of Zechariah and in other places in the minor prophets, people begin replacing God in their lives with false idols. Though our idols may look different from what idols look like in Zechariah, we often have idols replacing God. To identify these idols, ask yourself:

- Where am I spending most of my time?
- What/who is the first thing I go to for comfort?
- Am I willing to change/compromise my beliefs for something/someone?

Ask the Lord to identify your idols. Take time to recognize and confess these idols. Ask for the strength to turn away and turn toward God.

We can also see another theme throughout the minor prophets is the grace and forgiveness God has for us. Take time to thank the Lord for constantly extending his grace and forgiveness to us.

LESSON 15: SEPTEMBER 6, 2020

# *Malachi 2:17-3:5*

CHRIST IN THE MINOR PROPHETS

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LIVING UNDER THE WORD

Sermon Notes

# LIVING WITH ONE ANOTHER RENEW GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Reflect on the sermon. What resonated with you? What questions do you have? What would you like to know more about?

1. Read through the book of Malachi this week.
2. Make a list of what you have learned about God in this passage. Write what you have learned about his attributes, his commands, his promises, his view of relationships.
3. In light of what the people/the prophet in this passage did, how does that change your feelings about them? About God? What might they have been feeling as they faced the circumstances around them?

4. How does what you've learned in this passage attack your idols? Use the **Idols List** in the appendix to spur your thinking on this.

5. Describe the restorative hope that is found in this passage. How does this hope of restoration bring comfort to your soul?

6. Fill in the blank: The truth that God is \_\_\_\_\_ reminds me that I \_\_\_\_\_.

## *LIVING OUT OUR FAITH*

7. How will I live out my faith in light of the truths I have learned in this passage? How does this change my relationships?

## PRAYER

The prophecy in Malachi 3:1-5 was ultimately fulfilled through Jesus Christ.

For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. 1 Corinthians 15:3-4

Take time to thank God for sending his Son to be sacrificed for our sins. Reflect on how we have a good, loving God that cares for us so deeply. Praise and glory to our God forever and ever!

# Appendix

## IDOLATRY LIST

As Tim Keller states in his book *Counterfeit Gods*, an idol is “anything more important to you than God, anything that absorbs your heart and imagination more than God, and anything that you seek to give you what only God can give.” Simply put, an idol is anything that takes the place of God in your life.

To help you get started identifying idols in your life, we’ve created this list. It is not a comprehensive list, so please feel free to add your own personal idols to this list as the Spirit reveals them to you.

**POWER / CONTROL IDOL:** Life only has meaning, and I only have worth if I have power, control, and influence over people and the circumstances of my life.

In Christ I don’t need to have power and control. My life is controlled by Christ who loves me dearly and can manage things much better than I could.

**ACHIEVEMENT / SUCCESS IDOL:** Life only has meaning, and I only have worth if I avoid failure, am successful, and am recognized for my accomplishments and contributions.

In Christ I don’t need my own accomplishments or achievement; I have the achievement of Christ, his righteousness as my own.

**APPROVAL / RESPECT IDOL:** Life only has meaning, and I only have worth if I am loved, accepted, and respected by other people.

In Christ I am fully accepted by a holy God, so I don’t need the respect and acceptance of others to be content.

**WORK IDOL:** Life only has meaning, and I only have worth if I am highly productive and am accomplishing much.

Christ has accomplished all that needs to be done in my place so I do not need to strive or work hard in order to be valued.

**MATERIALISM (COMFORT/PLEASURE) IDOL:** Life only has meaning, and I only have worth if I have a certain level of wealth and financial freedom so that I can experience certain pleasures, achieve a particular quality of life, and own quality possessions.

What I have in Christ as his forgiven child is more valuable and satisfying than riches, pleasure, possessions, and experiences.

**IMAGE IDOL:** Life only has meaning, and I only have worth if I attain a particular kind of look or achieve a certain body shape.

My value does not lie in my physical appearance or condition, but in my spiritual standing before God.

**HELPING IDOL:** Life only has meaning, and I only have worth if people are dependent upon me and need me.

My value comes not from people needing me, but from the God who provided a great salvation for me. My position of needing him is a happy place.

**DEPENDENCE IDOL:** Life only has meaning, and I only have worth if someone is going to protect me and keep me safe.

In Christ I am safe and protected by one who loves me more dearly than anyone else could.

**FREEDOM / INDEPENDENCE IDOL:** Life only has meaning, and I only have worth if I am completely free from obligations to, responsibilities for, and expectations from other people.

From Christ's sacrifice for me, I learn that serving others is a place of joy, not a place of burden.

**RELIGION IDOL:** Life only has meaning, and I only have worth if I successfully live up to my group's moral code and complete my group's religious activities.

The need for the sacrifice of Christ on the cross shows me that I can never live up to any moral code and that Christ has done that for me through his righteous life credited to my account.

**RACIAL / CULTURE IDOL:** Life only has meaning, and I only have worth if my race and/or culture are ascendant and recognized as superior.

The gospel tells me that the ground is level at the cross, that all people are in the same need of a savior. That means that my worth is not attached to my race or culture but to my relationship with Christ.

**IDEOLOGY IDOL:** Life only has meaning, and I only have worth if my cause is preeminent, and increasing in influence.

The gospel tells me that only the cause of Christ and his glory is worth my concern. All other causes are only important as they relate to that supreme cause.

**INTELLECT / KNOWLEDGE IDOL:** Life only has meaning, and I only have worth if I have everything figured out, and there are no more loose ends.

In the gospel I recognize that Christ is the source of all wisdom and knowledge. That is enough for me; I don't need to attain to all knowledge and understanding myself.

**FAMILY IDOL:** Life only has meaning, and I only have worth if my children are happy or my parents are happy with me.

While my earthly family is a gift to me from God, I am aware that as a Christian, I was made a part of a bigger family where God is my Father who will always love me and is always for me.

**RELATIONSHIP IDOL:** Life only has meaning, and I only have worth if this certain person is in my life and happy to be there, and/or is happy with me or in love with me.

In Christ I have the most satisfying relationship I could have. I have the Heavenly Father who loves me unconditionally, the Son who gave himself for me, and the Holy Spirit who is always with me and in me.

**INNER RING IDOL:** Life only has meaning, and I only have worth if a particular social group, professional group, or other group lets me in.

In Christ I am accepted into the family of God which is the best place of belonging I could find.

**SUFFERING IDOL:** Life only has meaning, and I only have worth if I am hurting or in a problem; only then do I feel worthy of love or able to deal with guilt.

In Christ I have a solution to my guilt which does not require me to suffer to get rid of it. I am not worthy of love. I am guilty, but Christ paid the penalty for my sin and he loves me though I am not worthy of it.

Keep asking questions of your soul. What of these are you looking to as a coping mechanism to face the pain and brokenness of this fallen existence? Which of these are you looking to give you joy and a sense of wellness?

## SOURCES:

This list is a compilation from lists written by Tim Keller (the pastor of Redeemer Presbyterian Church in New York City), by Bob Flayhart (the pastor of Oak Mountain Presbyterian Church in Birmingham, AL, and by Bob Thune and Will Walker in *The Gospel-Centered Life*.

<http://takeyourvitaminz.blogspot.com/2013/04/tim-keller-diagnostic-on-idols-of-heart.html>

Bob Flayhart, *American Idols*; sermon from Isaiah 44:6-23, April 20, 2006

BobThune and Will Walker in *The Gospel-Centered Life*, chapter 6.

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