

Practical Living

Questions - Section 1

What does practical living mean to you?

What is the difference between providing someone with a meal versus teaching them how to cook?

If God gave us 121 commands that we were to obey, how would you go about becoming good at following each one?

Instead of giving us 121 commands to follow, God gives us commands and principles. What does that mean?

Assuming you could study any of the following topics, list them in order of importance to you: Adultery, Overeating, Worry, Depression, Anger, Alcohol and Drug Abuse, Sexual Addictions, Rebellion, and Pride and Humility. Provide the prioritized list confidentially to the teachers of the class.

Practical Living

Questions - Section 2a

How would you describe your conscience?

What does your conscience do for you?

When is it wise to trust your conscience (or can you trust it)?

Name someone in the Bible who followed his conscience but was wrong?

Is it okay to violate our conscience?

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Questions - Section 2b

How are we ever going to be in a position where we can trust our conscience more?

Can others "see" your conscience?

What happens to our conscience when we violate it over and over?

There are times when two people train their conscience to believe different things. Is this always wrong?

Practical Living

Questions - Section 3a

How would you define prudence?

What will a good measure of prudence give to you?

Are all decisions in our lives of equal weight or importance?

What are some things that influence decisions that you make?

If you tend to make bad decisions, what are some things you can do to improve your decisions?

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Questions - Section 3b

What are some factors that make it difficult to make good decisions?

Can we make “split-second” decisions and have a good outcome?

Is it always a good idea to delay every decision so much thought can be put into it?

What is a good tool to use when making a major decision in our lives?

What is spiritual discernment and how do we develop it?

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Questions - Section 4

Is it important for a Christian to have self-control?

How would you define self-control?

What kinds of behaviors make it difficult to have self-control?

What does James say is the most difficult part of our being to control?

When we make bad choices in life, is that always a demonstration of a lack of self-control?

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Questions - Section 5a

What are some things that can happen when we lose self-control?

How do you develop self-control?

What are some teachings from the bible that are focused on developing self-control?

Can you think of a program in the world that is focused on helping get control of themselves?

Is self-control really about you grabbing control of yourself?

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Questions - Section 5b

What do we learn from giving to the treasury of the church and does it help with self-control?

If you have ever been on a diet, has it ever taught you anything about self-control?

Who should be the first one to discipline you?

When things are going quite badly for us, we might need to stop and do what?

How will we know if we are doing well with our self-control or if we need more work on it?

Practical Living

Questions - Section 6

The second most important law of God is to love your neighbor as yourself. What does this help us with in the area of self-control?

What is it called when a person thinks too highly of themselves? Does this interfere with self-control?

How would you define self-righteousness? Does it help or hinder the development of self-control?

What is true righteousness when contrasted with self-righteousness?

Practical Living

Questions - Section 7a

What is a habit?

Are habits good or bad?

What is a habit that we take to an extreme?

How do we keep from taking a habit to an extreme?

How do we develop good habits?

Practical Living

Questions - Section 7b

What does an addiction take away from us and what does it do to our life?

How do addictions develop?

Do addictions fill a need in our life and cause us to be satisfied?

What are some things we can be addicted to?

What is the answer to avoiding or ending addictions?

DEPRESSION - *Write from the Heart!*

Pre-Work Class 4

- The things we expose ourselves to can affect our mood. In what ways do books, TV shows, movies, video games, internet, and social media affect people's mood? Describe the benefits and dangers of these types of media.
- The Lord wants you to love Him with all your mind. Read Matthew 22:37. Look at the Wrong Belief / Right Belief boxes.

Wrong Belief:

The failures, losses, and disappointment in my life have robbed me of all the joy. There's no hope for my future, and there's nothing I can do about it.

Right Belief:

I admit I am depressed over the circumstances in my life. But in Christ, I have hope. I know he loves me. I will choose to renew my mind with God's word and do whatever I need to do in order to glorify God in my Life.

What reoccurring wrong beliefs do you struggle with? What right beliefs, from God's word, can replace with them?

- God desires that you honor him with your body. Read 1 Corinthians 6:20 What physical changes can you make that would lead to a better sense of well-being and health? What habits need to start, stop, or change?
- The Lord commands us to "bear one another's burdens". Read Galatians 6:2. Think about those in your life who are broken or even depressed. How can you best love them this week? (Simply listening to their struggles and being a calming presence can make a big difference.)

A Positive Perspective on Depression

➤ **You need to see your life from God's perspective.**

He cares about you and has positive plans for your life.

The Lord says in, "Jeremiah 29:11 (ESV): For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope."

➤ **You need to know that God has a purpose for everything He allows in your life.**

Nothing in your life occurs that has not first been filtered through God's fingers. If God permits it, it can be used for your good and His glory!

The Lord's word says in, "Romans 8:28 (ESV): 28 And we know that for those who love God, all things work together for good, for those who are called according to His purpose."

➤ **You need to know that there will be times when your heart will be pressed down, but also times of restoration because God is a healer of broken hearts.**

He heals us when we give our heart to Him. And, He knows how to restore our joy.

The Lord's word says in, "Psalm 147:3 (ESV): 3 He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds."

➤ **You need to know that no matter how great your depression or despondency, God can open your eyes to his purpose for your life.**

Just as storms replenish the dry, parched soil, giving birth to a new life, the storms in life can revitalize your relationship with the Lord and give birth to personal growth beyond what you could ever imagine.

The Lord's word says in, "Psalm 119:67 (ESV): Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I keep your word."

Psalm 119:72-73 (ESV): The law of your mouth is better to me than thousands of gold and silver pieces. Your hands have made and fashioned me; give me understanding that I may learn your commandments."

- ❖ **2 Corinthians 4:16-18 (ESV): So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day. For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.**

DEPRESSION -

Right to the Heart!

Class 6-

What is God's Purpose for Depression?

➤ To develop obedience

The Lord's word says in, " Psalm 119:67,71,72(ESV): 67 Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I keep your word... 71 It is good for me that I was afflicted, that I might learn your statutes. 72 The law of your mouth is better to me than thousands of gold and silver pieces.

➤ To reveal your weakness and Christ's power

The Lord's word says in, " 2 Corinthians 12:9 (ESV): But He (Jesus) said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me."

➤ To develop endurance, character, and hope

The Lord's word says in, " Romans 5:3-5 (ESV): Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.

➤ To make you more teachable

The Lord's word says in, " Psalm 119:71 ESV): It is good for me that I was afflicted, that I might learn your statutes. "

➤ To give you a desire for eternal glory rather than temporal pleasures

The Lord's word says in, " Romans 8:18 (ESV): For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us."

➤ **To test the genuineness of your faith**

The Lord's word says in, "1 Peter 1:6–7 (ESV): In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ. "

➤ **To develop maturity**

The Lord's word says in, "James 1:2–4 (ESV): Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing."

➤ **To cause you to rely on God instead of your own strengths and resources**

The Lord's word says in, "2 Corinthians 1:8–9 (ESV): For we do not want you to be unaware, brothers, of the affliction we experienced in Asia. For we were so utterly burdened beyond our strength that we despaired of life itself. Indeed, we felt that we had received the sentence of death. But that was to make us rely not on ourselves but on God who raises the dead."

- **Confront** any loss in your life, allowing yourself to grieve and be healed.
In Ecclesiastes 3:4 it tells us there is a time to weep and a time to laugh and a time to mourn.
- **Offer** Your heart to God for cleansing, and confess your sins.
In 1 John 1:8-9 God tells us that we all sin and if we confess our sins, God is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.
- **Nurture** thoughts that focus on God's great love for you.
In Jeremiah 31:3 God says he has loved us with an everlasting love and has made us with his unfailing kindness..
- **Quit** negative thinking and negative self-talk.
In Philippians 4:8, we are told to fill our minds with things that are true, noble, right, pure, lovely, and excellent . We are told to focus or think on these things.
- **Understand** God's eternal purpose for allowing personal loss and heartache.
In Romans 8:28 says, "And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose."
- **Exchange** You're hurt and anger for the choice to give thanks (even when you don't feel thankful).
In 1 Thessalonians 5:18 tells us to Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for us in Christ.
- **Remember** That God is sovereign over your life, and he promises hope for your future.
In Jeremiah 29:11 we read, "For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for peace and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope."

We need to see life from God's perspective!

DEPRESSION -

Right to the Heart!

Class 6-

How you can HELP...

➤ **Learn all you can about depression.**

Search the scriptures and read book by reputable people.

The Lord says in, "Proverbs 23:12 (ESV): Apply your heart to instruction and your ear to words of knowledge."

➤ **Talk about depression.**

Talking help remove the stigma of depression.

The Lord's word says in, "Proverbs 25:11 (ESV): A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in a setting of silver."

➤ **If suicide is a concern, ask, "are you thinking about hurting yourself?"**

Take all threats of suicide and self injury seriously.

The Lord says in, "Proverbs 18:21 (ESV): Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruits."

➤ **Be an accountability partner.**

Let them know that you'll be there for them.

The Lord's word says in, "Ecclesiastes 4:9 (ESV): Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil."

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➤ **Contact them regularly.**

Frequent phone calls, texts, emails make a difference.

The Lord's word says in, "1 Thessalonians 5:11 (ESV): Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing."

➤ **Listen to them and hear their pain.**

Listening affirms their value.

The Lord's word says in, "James 1:19 (ESV): 19 Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger..."

➤ **Verbally encourage them.**

This is good to do sincerely and often.

The Lord's word says in, "Ephesians 4:29 (ESV): 29 Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear."

➤ **Realize the power of touch.**

A hand on the shoulder or a hug appropriately timed is powerful.

The Lord's word says in, "1 Peter 5:14 (ESV): Greet one another with the kiss of love. Peace to all of you who are in Christ."

➤ **Have a singing in your home and invite them to be a part of it.**

Music is therapeutic but speaking to one another in psalms and hymns is even more powerful.

The Lord's word says in, "Ephesians 5:19 (ESV): ...addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart."

➤ **Bring laughter into their lives.**

Have them over and play cards, watch movies, and have an enjoyable evening together.

The Lord's word says in, "Ephesians 5:19 (ESV): Proverbs 17:22 (ESV): A joyful heart is good medicine..."

➤ **Enlist help from other family and friends.**

Be specific about your concerns and make sure you enlist trustworthy people.

The Lord's word says in, "Galatians 6:1–2 (ESV): Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ."

➤ **Pray for them regularly.**

Pray for God to heal, teach, comfort, and guide them amid their pain.

The Lord's word says in, "Ephesians 6:18 (ESV): praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints..."

- **DON'T say:** You shouldn't feel that way

DO say: I care about what you are feeling.
Would you like to share your feelings with me?
If ever you want to talk, I'm here for you.

Scripture: Proverbs 20:5 (ESV): 5 The purpose in a man's heart is like deep water, but a man of understanding will draw it out.

- **DON'T say:** You need to quit taking that medicine

DO say: Not all medicines work the same for everyone. I'll go with you to get a thorough medical evaluation so that the doctor will make sure the medicine is working for you.
Talk specifically to a competent Doctor Who specializes in depression.
Don't be afraid to get a second opinion

Scripture: Proverbs 15:22 (ESV): 2 Without counsel plans fail, but with many advisers they succeed.

- **DON'T say:** You just need to pray more.

DO say: I'm praying for you, and I'm going to keep praying.
Can I pray with you. (Pray for them specifically in the prayer.)
How can I pray for you today?

Scripture: 1 Samuel 12:23 (ESV): Moreover, as for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the Lord by ceasing to pray for you, and I will instruct you in the good and the right way.

- **DON'T say:** You just need to read the Bible more.

DO say: There are several passages in the Bible that have given me much hope, and I've written some of them down for you. May I share them with you?

Here are some hope filled scriptures that I find have helped me when I have read them three times a day to center my mind.

Scripture: Psalm 119:147 (ESV): 147 I rise before dawn and cry for help; I hope in your words.

➤ **DON'T say:** Do you need to go to church.

DO say: we've been really missing you at services and would love to pick you up on Sunday, then we can do lunch.

I'm a member of the church of Christ. The people I attend with help give me strength and encourage me. I would love for you to come with me this next Sunday.

Scripture: Hebrews 10:24–25 (ESV): And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, 25 not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

➤ **DON'T say:** Snap out of it! Get over it! Suck it up buttercup!

DO say: I'm going to stick with you, and will get through this together.

Scripture: Proverbs 18:24 (ESV): ... but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.