



SOUL CARE: PART 1: "WHAT GOOD WILL IT BE...?"

January 5, 2020
Pastor Brad Williams

BIBLICAL TEXT(S)

MAIN TEXT(S):

Matthew 16:26; Psalm 23:1-3; Matthew 11:28-30

SUMMARY

At the beginning of a new year, people often make goals and set resolutions for how they would like to improve their lives. Most of these goals and resolutions are attempts at behavior modification. However, often, our lives are lacking something more than simply being more disciplined. We're often neglecting the most important part of us: our souls.

The Bible describes humanity as made up of three different parts: body, spirit, and soul. The soul is part of our inner life, the very heart of who we are and what connects us to God. In our modern world that differentiates between the spiritual and everything else, it can be easy to neglect our souls. However, our souls are an integral part of us and when our soul suffers or is neglected, our whole life suffers. That's why soul care is so important and why the Bible spends time talking about our souls, something we will examine this week and the weeks to come.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

These questions are designed to help you lead your group through a progression of engagement with the Bible passage and the speaker's message, helping them understand and apply the teaching.

LEAN IN

These are icebreaker/warm up questions, mostly just to get the group talking and start the flow of conversation. Choose one question and talk it over for 5-10 minutes.

1. What comes to your mind when you hear the word "soul"?
2. Do you have a New Years Resolution or goal for this year?
What is it? If not, why didn't you make one?
3. Do you have any traditions or rituals that you do at the start of a new year?
4. Would you describe your life as more chaotic or more peaceful? Why?

LOOK DOWN

These are questions on the passage and observations about what's been read.

Spend about 15-20 minutes on three questions max

1. How would you explain Matthew 16:26 to someone who hadn't read the Bible before?
What do you think the verse is talking about?
2. In Psalm 23, who is doing all the action (who is the subject of the verbs)?
What does this tell us about soul care?
3. What are the metaphors that are used in Psalm 23 for God "refreshing" the soul?
4. Who does Jesus call to him in Matthew 11:28-30? What does he offer to them?
5. What do you learn about the soul/soul care from these verses?

LOOK OUT

These questions help connect the world of the Bible to today.

Spend about 15-20 minutes on three questions max

1. The soul is mysterious. It's a part of our inner world, something only we can evaluate.
Do you think most people are aware of their inner world/their soul? Why or why not?

2. How is the world around us like “loud water”, the opposite of the “quiet waters” described in Psalm 23?
3. When people are lacking something or feel like something is off in their lives, what are some things they try to do to fix it? How do these remedies compare to what you learned by reading the passages for this week?
4. How have you seen God restore the soul of a person you know or know of (from today or from history)? How have you seen God provide peace for someone in the midst of the chaos of the world?
5. Do you think most people think of following Jesus as a “light and easy burden” that “provides rest for your souls”? Why or why not?

LOOK IN

These are questions that help you consider personal application.

Spend about 15-20 minutes on three questions max

1. On a scale of 1 to 10, how aware do you think you are of your inner life/soul? What could you do in your life to be more aware of your soul?
2. Do you think your life is more fragmented or more in rhythm with how God created you? Why?
3. When something is off in your life, what is usually your first response? How might this week’s sermon/verses/discussion change that?
4. How have you seen God restore your soul and give you peace in your life? How does this encourage you in the midst of the chaos of life?
5. Does thinking about caring for your soul seem like an additional burden or something that will give you rest? Why is that? How do the verses from this week encourage you or change your thinking?

LIVE IT OUT

These action steps help apply this week’s message to day to day life.

Choose one question and talk it over for 5-10 minutes.

1. Do you need to be more aware of your soul and its care? How can your group pray for you as you do this? Is there anything you can do this week to make space for your soul?
2. Have the verses/sermon/discussion from this week revealed anything in your attitude or actions that needs to change? What actions do you need to take and how can your group support you this week?
3. What can you do this week to make more space for God to provide rest for your soul and “quiet waters”?