

WELCOME HOME

Part 1

I. YOU ARE TIRED OF PRETENDING TO BE PERFECT

How terrible for you, teachers of the Law and Pharisees! You hypocrites! You are like whitewashed tombs, which look fine on the outside but are full of bones and decaying corpses on the inside. In the same way, on the outside you appear good to everybody, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and sins. Matthew 23:27-28 GNT

OUR PEOPLE AND OUR PASTORS ARE IMPERFECT

For all have sinned; all fall short of God's glorious standard. Romans 3:23 NLT

DISCUSSION: What are some areas of your life that you are good at and want people to think you are perfect? How far are you willing to go to keep up the façade?

II. YOU ARE BURNED OUT ON PLAYING RELIGIOUS GAMES

Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly. Matthew 11:28-30 THE MESSAGE

DISCUSSION: In what way do you bring your best to church by putting up a false front? Are you tired of playing games? Do you want a real rest?

III. YOU ARE READY TO GET REAL

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE REAL?

- Realize the depth and scope of your sin and the miracle of God's grace

For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out. Romans 7:18 ESV

God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God. Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it. Ephesians 2:8-9 NLT

DISCUSSION: Often we are unable to see our sin completely. We need others to help us identify it. Who is helping you to honestly identify the sin in your life? Who's helping you to identify and speak the truth about your character?

- Examine yourself daily by looking to Jesus Christ as the standard

Let us examine and probe our ways, And let us return to the LORD. Lamentations 3:40 NASB

Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed that he does not fall. 1 Corinthians 10:12 NASB

“TAKE A FEARLESS MORAL INVENTORY”

But if we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all wickedness. 1 John 1:9 NLT

DISCUSSION: What isn't Christ like in you? How often do you examine your character, your motives, your actions, etc. in light of the person of Jesus Christ?

- Accept guidance and input from Christian leaders who speak truth and challenge you in your faith

Be responsive to your pastoral leaders. Listen to their counsel. They are alert to the condition of your lives and work under the strict supervision of God... Hebrews 13:17 THE MESSAGE

Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls... Hebrews 13:17 ESV

DISCUSSION: How will you accept guidance from those around you that are in your spiritual community? If you are unwilling to yield to your spiritual community, what's the truth behind that which is your barrier?

- Live your life in community with Christians who are committed to being real and will encourage you to grow in becoming an authentic follower of Christ

Make this your common practice: Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you can live together whole and healed. The prayer of a person living right with God is something powerful to be reckoned with...
James 5:16 THE MESSAGE

PRAYER PROJECT: Take 5-7 minutes to be alone with God. Talk to him about what you feel is your #1 barrier to being real with self, others and God?

Talk to your group about your experience.

Each night this week take 10-15 minutes at the end of the day to examine how your barrier was present in your life for that day. Where did God show up in order to help take down your barrier? Where did you accept His help and where did you resist it? How was His transformational power evident in your life today in regards to removing the barrier in your life?