

Life Hacks

[how to use obstacles to grow in your faith]

Session Guide

Bethel's Rock Church



INTRODUCTION

Whether in our lives or in the lives of our children, most people desire to prosper in life. Some believe in fate and that all things are predetermined; that all the good and bad that happens in their life is far out of their control.

Others believe in luck. They believe that they have moments of luck when everything aligns and something good comes out of it. They might claim that the success in their life is a lucky break or that when they fail or they experience an obstacle in life, it's bad luck.

Even when it comes to Christians, there are some who believe because they are saved by God's grace that they can do whatever they would like, void of character, integrity and Kingdom principles. They think they will prosper simply because of God's unmerited favor.

To truly prosper, there is so much more that we must learn and understand. Bethel's Rock Life Hacks Series takes you through 12 principles that will unlock Kingdom reality and Kingdom prosperity in your lives. These 12 topics are often seen as obstacles or are aspects of life that we have a hard time understanding, but as we look to the Word for answers, the truth that resides there will shed light on these topics and allow us to conquer and use these obstacles to grow in our faith.

We encourage you to grab a group of friends, co-workers, neighbors or family and discover what God can do through these obstacles. The principles in this series are free for the taking and applicable to everyone.

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DEATH

LIFE HACKS: LESSON 1

Death is the greatest unknown that we face in this life. Often we either ignore it or obsess about it and are crippled by the thought of it. The Bible holds many important truths regarding death, which is important because we will all be affected by death, if you haven't been already.

It was never God's plan for man to die or experience the affects of death. Death entered the world through the disobedience of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. Understanding that this is the consequence of their sin and not the original intention of God, allows you to begin the process of viewing death through a new perspective.

Correcting our perspective of death includes acknowledging that death isn't something to be feared, but that it's but a shadow of what is in store for us. Death is the doorway, leading us out of our temporary earthy lives and into eternity. And yet, we often find ourselves fearful of losing someone or of dying ourselves.

Fear is from the enemy. The Word tells us that God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of a sound mind. But some live their whole life in bondage to the fear of death. Hebrews mentions how Christ came to earth and shared our humanity, so that he could conquer death and "free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death". This obstacle is not new, but has God provided a solution.

Sometimes this fear can cause us to desperately cling to this life, but our lives are something we cannot keep. There are even those who believe that there exists a "fountain of youth". They tirelessly search for this discovery that they believe will give them everlasting life and keep them from dying. The saddest part about this is that the solution to everlasting life and conquering death does exist, and it's right in front of them - it's Jesus. Jesus conquered death for us all. All we need to do is receive it.

I encourage you to embrace this session and all it has to offer. Adjusting our perspective on death allows us to combat the fear that tries to bind us and live in the freedom of knowing that we have the promise of eternity ahead of us.



GROUP DISCUSSION

1. Why are we so scared of death or want to ignore it? How can we get to a place where we no longer fear death? How do I face my own death?
2. What does the Word show us about dealing with death? Read the stories of Lazarus, Naomi and Job to shed some light on this too.
3. How can I process death or grieve in a healthy way? What does this look like?
4. How can I support those who are grieving a loss?
5. What are your thoughts on "Sitting Sheva"? Is listening our most powerful tool?
6. How does being a follower of Christ impact how we deal with death?

SCRIPTURE

As you go through this study, I encourage you to read and study these scriptures with your group. These are key scriptures that reveal the truth about death and how we can gain the correct perspective on it.

"The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full." John 10:10

"Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might break the power of him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil— and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death." Hebrews 2:14-15

"For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind." 2 Timothy 1:7 KJV

"Anyone who loves their life will lose it, while anyone who hates their life in this world will keep it for eternal life." John 12:25

"Where, O Death, is your victory? Where, O Death, is your sting?" 1 Cor. 15:55



ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURES TO STUDY

John 10:7-10	Psalms 23:4 KJV
1 Corinthians 15:50-58	John 11:1-44 (Lazarus)
Hosea 13:14	Ruth 1 (Naomi)
Philippians 1:21	Job 2 (Job)

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- It was never God's plan for man to die and experience the effects of death and loss
- God has not given us a spirit of fear, so it's time to break the bondage of fearing our death
- Jesus conquered death, so death has no sting!
- We have a limited time on this earth. Be intentional with how you spend it. Will you die a warrior's death?
- It's important to acknowledge death and process the emotions and pain that come with it. Even Jesus did this when Lazarus died. He wept.

PRAYER FOCUS

"God, we thank you for sending your son to this earth. He became human and conquered death, so that we might live. The Prince of death has been defeated and we praise you for this! Help us to battle fear that may creep in when we think of losing someone or worry about the end of our life on this earth. Remind us of the proper perspective of death; that it's a doorway that allows us to enter into eternity with you. Thank you for comforting us and being the hope that we can cling to when we experience loss. Guide us in how to support and pray for those around us experiencing loss. We thank you God for defeating death. Amen."



PRAYER

LIFE HACKS: LESSON 2

Since the beginning of mankind, we have been searching for a way to communicate with our creator. We've found ourselves in this place where we do not truly understand the nature of prayer, but have instead turned it into a dysfunctional and manipulated relational "tool" in our relationship with God. Sometimes we only approach God when we've tried everything else and want to ask Him to step in.

Or maybe we see someone in need and tell them that we will be praying for them. But do we? Do we really spend time in prayer for them later? Maybe you do, but sadly, this phrase has oftentimes become a spiritualized version of "Be well and we wish you the best".

In this lesson, we will tackle 4 lies that we believe regarding prayer:

- If it is God's will, it will just happen, whether I pray or not
- God does answer prayers, just not my prayers
- The only time I need to pray is when I am in need
- We must pray fervently to convince God to do what I am asking

There are 4 powerful truths that help with unlocking the truth about what prayer is and how we should pray.

- God's will is not always done. We need to pray and partner with Him to release His will on earth
- As a believer in Christ, you are righteous and your prayers work and are effective
- Prayer is the primary form of communication between the supernatural and the natural
- God's posture to us is to respond. You don't have to convince Him to be good. It's His nature, all of the time.

We pray that these truths allow you to enter into the prayer life that God desires to have with you.



GROUP DISCUSSION

1. We can find ourselves telling people that we will pray for them, but do we? Have you ever found yourself in this position?
2. Share examples of times you've been lead to pray for someone or something and later found that they had needed that prayer right then.
3. Discuss the 4 lies that we often believe in regards to prayer. **
4. What are the truths that combat these lies? **
5. Discuss the 3 types of prayer. Petition, Warfare, and Relational. Which do you tend to focus on the most when praying?
6. Discuss setting aside time to pray each day vs. praying all day, throughout the day. Is there a place for both in your life?

** lists of the 4 lies/truths can be found on the previous page

SCRIPTURE

As you go through this study, I encourage you to read and study these scriptures with your group. These are key scriptures that show how to pray, why we pray and the power that we have through prayer.

"Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us" Ephesians 3:20

"No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us." Romans 8:37

"Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me." John 15:4

"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest." Matthew 11:28



ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURES TO STUDY

Matthew 6:5-15

John 15

Romans 8:31

Matthew 16:19

1 John 4:4

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Prayer is more than just talking, it's our access point to the Kingdom of God
- We are stewards of this earth and are able to reach into Heaven and release His will on earth when we pray
- Power has been placed in us through the Holy Spirit. Prayer is the vehicle used to release that power.
- Prayer reminds us that we are more powerful than Satan!
- Your whole life should become a prayer to God. This includes scheduled time with the Lord, but also praying "without ceasing"
- Prayer is personal, not a ritual

PRAYER FOCUS

"God, thank you for prayer. Thank you for creating this access point into Heaven, where we can partner with you to release your will on this earth. Give us wisdom to fight off the lies that I am not good enough to pray or that I need to pray a certain way in order to convince you to do good. I pray that each of us take what we've learned to heart and use the truth about prayer to strengthen and grow our daily prayer life. Let our prayers transform and strengthen our relationship with you. Amen"



AUTHORITY

LIFE HACKS: LESSON 3

According to the Bible, God has given us all kinds of power. He's given us the power to cast out demons, pray for those who are sick and see them healed, and pray with people to shed their chains and to find true freedom and identity in Christ.

If we've been given all of this power, why does it seem like at times we cannot access it? In truth, many of us do not understand or hold the key to accessing this power we've been given. The key to unlocking the power is understanding authority. Power is something that we all desire or need, but authority is the permission or right to use that power.

Unlocking this power will require you to study the Bible and see what God has to say about authority - what has been given to us and what is required of us. In John 14, Jesus tells us that we would see even greater works than the ones accomplished during his time on earth.

This session on authority is designed to address these 4 questions:

1. What is the source of Authority?
2. What is the secret truth about Authority?
3. What is the scope of that Authority?
4. What is the strength of that Authority?

Are you ready to access the full scope of your authority? Life Hacks Session 3: Authority has everything you need to begin to understand and access the authority given you.



GROUP DISCUSSION

1. In John 14:12, Jesus tells us that we will see greater works than when he was on earth. Many act as if these greater works are for only pastors and ministers to handle. Is this true?
2. Why is it so difficult for human beings to honor and respect authority?
3. What role does the spirit of rebellion play in the discussion of authority?
4. How does not honoring authority impact your authority over aspects of your own life?
5. How do we submit to authority?
6. Must we obey all authority? Are there any instances where we should not obey authority?

SCRIPTURE

As you go through this study, I encourage you to read and study these scriptures with your group. These are key scriptures that lay a foundation for understanding authority - both submitting to it, and accessing its power in our own lives.

"Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father" - John 14:12

"I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you." - Luke 10:19

"...All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations..." Matthew 28:18-19

*"Consequently, whoever rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves."
- Romans 13:2*



ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURES TO STUDY

Genesis 1:28	Matthew 8:5-13
1 Corinthians 4:18-21	Hebrews 13:17
Luke 9:1-2	1 Peter 2:11-17
Romans 13:1-7	

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- All power is derived from God, and all authority is assigned by Him
- You cannot have authority over what God wants you to have authority over unless you come under the authority that God has placed you under
- The spirit of rebellion is at work in all of us, and often robs us of the authority we've been given. We are to submit to all authority put in place above us, unless it directly contradicts with His Word and commands
- Understanding and submitting to all authority placed over us, allows us to have authority and the power given to us that is talked about in the Bible

PRAYER FOCUS

"Lord, we ask that you help us respect and submit to the authority placed in our lives. This is not always easy, but we see that this is how you've designed it. In order to access the power you have given us and that authority we've been given, we must submit to authority. As we self-reflect and give ourselves a heart check, please reveal to us any areas in our life where we need to submit. Help us realize the authority and power that we have and embolden us to boldly step forward in that authority so that we can see people healed, raised from the dead and living in freedom. Thank you God, Amen. "

REST

LIFE HACKS: LESSON 4

Our lack of true rest has become normal; maybe even expected. How often have you received the response “Oh we’re good, just really busy” when you ask some how they are? Now, stop and turn that around. How often has that been *your* response when someone has asked you how you are?

The truth is that we’ve all but erased our need for taking a Sabbath. We often tie our success, self-worth and importance to how busy we are. So in order to be important, successful or accomplished, we feel the need to fill every second of every day full of activities, work or errands. Busyness has become a badge of honor.

The issue is that we are living without margin. Many of our problems in life are either caused by, or made worse by our lack of rest. We are addicted to “busy” and don’t realize that we aren’t living in success; we are living on bondage. We are living in a cage, constrained by the hectic schedule we’ve created. By not making rest a priority, we’re becoming a willing party to Satan’s desire to steal, kill and destroy us.

So how can we overcome this cultural norm? The Word has a lot to say about rest. Starting with Genesis, we see that God took a Sabbath after creating the world. God also makes it clear that the Sabbath is a gift, something He created for man. And He commands us to remember the Sabbath and keep it holy. In addition, we see that Jesus had a way of life that made rest a priority.

It’s time that we make a change. Instead of prioritizing “busyness” as our culture and the world tell us we should, let’s instead prioritize a healthy rhythm that includes intentional and planned rest. By living in the rest that God designed for us, we experience power, creativity, strength, health and joy.

As you go through this study, I encourage you to be intentional about your rest going forward. Plan for rest and be blessed.



GROUP DISCUSSION

1. What does the Bible show us about rest? How does the Bible describe Jesus and his rhythm of life? Did it include rest?
2. Taking a Sabbath is a command, not a suggestion. Why do you think we don't seem to take that seriously?
3. We may stay busy in order to hide from the broken and dark places in our life. How can God fix what is broken if we are too busy?
4. Taking a Sabbath is an act of trust and faith. If we aren't taking Sabbath, do we really trust God's plan or are we relying on our own self-sufficiency?
5. What does rest look like?
6. How can you be intentional about taking rest going forward? What will you do this Sabbath?

SCRIPTURE

As you go through this study, I encourage you to read and study these scriptures with your group. The Bible is clear about the Sabbath and rest itself. Even God took a Sabbath and Jesus often "withdrew" to pray. Allow the Word to shed light on how we can incorporate rest into our everyday lives.

"Yet the news about him spread all the more, so that crowds of people came to hear him and to be healed of their sicknesses. But Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed." Luke 5:15-16

"Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy." Exodus 20:8

"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

Matthew 11:28-30

"Then he said to them, "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath" Mark 2:27.



ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURES TO STUDY

Genesis 2:2-3	Exodus 20:8-11
Numbers 15:32-36	Exodus 33:14
Mark 6:30-32	Deuteronomy 5:12-14
Ezekiel 20:19-20	Hebrews 4:9-11

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- God commands us to take a Sabbath. This isn't a suggestion.
- God rested after creation and Jesus "often withdrew to lonely places and prayed"
- When everything is going great, we are the most susceptible to ignoring our need for rest.
- We are wired and created to need a Sabbath
- In order to hear God, we must enter the frequency of his voice, which is found in rest
- By choosing to Sabbath, we are protesting and rebelling against our innate desire to trust and worship our self-sufficiency
- Taking a Sabbath is an act of trust and faith

PRAYER FOCUS

"Lord, as we reflect on your purpose and design for rest, we ask that you show us places in our life where we've neglected to take a Sabbath. We acknowledge that in your wisdom, you designed rest to keep us healthy and to bless us. Thank you for the gift of rest. Guide us as we battle the world's addiction to busyness, and find true and pure rest in you. Speak to us in these moments of quiet. Help us be intentional with our Sabbath and not neglect this promise and command. Thank you God. Amen"



UNITY

LIFE HACKS: LESSON 5

Culture today has taught us to find those who think, believe and act like us and group together. We have no problem uniting with them. However, culture has also taught us to despise, name call and sometimes even become hostile to those who are not like us; who do not think like us. We “cancel” anyone who dare speak out against the narrative. This division may be expected of the world, but sadly, it runs rampant within the Church too.

What does the Bible have to say about this? Well, for one, it creates a clear picture of what happens when a kingdom or house is divided. In both Matthew and Mark, Jesus states a kingdom or house divided against itself cannot stand. And yet, we can't figure out why being so focused on what divides us (politics, the pandemic, masks etc) causes tension and issues within the Church.

If you study the early church in the New Testament, there's a lot to be said about being united. Jesus himself prays for us to be one, as he and God are one. Early believers are often described as being “one in heart and mind” and sharing all of their possessions so that no one was lacking. They came together, putting aside their differences, and focused on one purpose - sharing the gospel. And because they remained united in that purpose, we can attribute the spread of the church and its current state to the way that they came together back then.

The truth is, our brothers and sisters across the world are dying for their faith. Billions of fellow humans are entering an eternal death. And we are distracted by earthly problems created by governments and systems that are passing away. We've prioritized fighting and bickering about issues that will likely never be solved over uniting as one body and working together to save people from eternal damnation.

If the movement of Jesus Christ is going to move forward, we are going to have to come together. We pray that as you go through this study, you will reflect on God's desire for us to be united and address anything that may need to change to help you get there. You can model what unity looks like to your family, friends and anyone within your influence. It begins with YOU.



GROUP DISCUSSION

1. Why do you think it's so difficult to get along? How can we set aside our differences and work together?
2. How can re-focusing on the eternal allow us to view earthly problems differently?
3. Discuss the picture the Bible paints of the early church in Acts 2:42-27.
4. Ephesians 4:29 says "Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen". What does this imply about weighing our words and how does this tie into unity?
5. Reflect and discuss ways that you can do your part in working towards the type of unity described in the Bible.

SCRIPTURE

As you go through this study, I encourage you to read and study these scriptures with your group. The Word is full of scriptures that support God's desire and will for His children to be unified and act as one body.

"I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one - I in them and you in me - so that they may be brought to complete unity."
John 17:22-23

"Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace"
Ephesians 4:3

"All believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of their possessions was their own, but they shared everything they had." Acts 4:32

"The LORD said, "If as one people speaking the same language they have begun to do this, then nothing they plan to do will be impossible for them." Genesis 11:6

"If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. If a house is divided against itself, that house cannot stand." Mark 3:24-25



ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURES TO STUDY

Genesis 11:1-9	John 17:6-26
Ephesians 4:29	Ephesians 4
Acts 4:32-36	Acts 2:42-47
Deuteronomy 32:30	Matthew 12:25
1 Corinthians 12:12:-27	1 Corinthians 13:1-6

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- It is the heart of the Father that we are in unity and “just get along”
- If we come together for a common purpose, there is nothing that will be impossible for us.
- Restoring healthy communication and listening to one another, rather than focusing on just being heard, is vital to restoring unity
- We are fighting a spiritual battle so we must fight with spiritual weapons. We must rely on God and agree in prayer with Christ’s prayer for us to be united as one body.
- We are stronger together. We gain strength from those around us.
- We can’t force others to catch the vision for unity, but we can do our part and model unity for those within our influence.

PRAYER FOCUS

“Lord, we know that your heart is for your children to be united. Enable us to love the people we may not like or agree with. Fulfill your will in our lives. Lord, we submit our will to yours. Please guide us and strengthen us to be able to focus and work through the issues of this world that serve only as distractions that cause division. Help us to unite and prioritize our one common purpose - reaching those who do not yet know you. Allow us to view others through the lens of being your beloved child and creation. We thank you God for your design for unity and pray that you help each of us do our part to fulfill your will for unity. Amen.



SPIRIT WORLD

LIFE HACKS: LESSON 6

Hollywood has taken the idea of demons and transformed them into a terrifying villain of a character, perfect for starring in their films. And unfortunately, much of what they've portrayed demons to be, has become how we view them, whether it holds any truth or not.

Many people fall into one of two categories: being terrified of anything demonic or maybe even choosing to believe dark forces and Satan don't exist, or viewing it as a harmless, recreational game to dabble in. The truth is, neither of these approaches are healthy.

It is extremely important that we understand the seriousness of the evil that is at work on this earth. But just as vital is realizing that as children of God, we do not need to fear. The same Spirit of God that defeated Satan lives within us and gives the authority to overcome all things.

Throughout this session, you'll learn to view obstacles and your surroundings in this physical realm, through a spiritual lens. Your life and the events in it will become clearer when you understand what you are really battling. And you will see the people in your life clearer when you realize who you are actually battling.

We need to stop focusing on what we see with our eyes and understand what the Kingdom of God is really about. By understanding what we are really up against, we can appropriately fight this battle using the spiritual weapons we have been given.

We encourage you to challenge yourself to truly see the world through a spiritual lens as you watch and discuss this session on the Spirit World.



GROUP DISCUSSION

1. Why do we want to believe this spiritual world doesn't exist? Or on the opposite spectrum, why do you think some dabble in it and don't take it seriously enough?
2. Why do you think we consider ourselves ill-equipped to handle demons and spirits of darkness? What does the Word say about this?
3. Discuss the fact that angels are present all throughout the Bible, but we are skeptical of anyone who says they've encountered angels now.
4. By understanding that what happens in our physical world is a reflection of the spiritual battle going on in the spirit world, how does this affect how you view obstacles or occurrences in your life? Will this change how you decide to tackle these obstacles?

SCRIPTURE

As you go through this study, I encourage you to read and study these scriptures, and those listed on the next page, to better understand the spirit world and how it affects our every day life.

"For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms."
Ephesians 6:12

"...Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name'. He replied, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. I have given you the authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you".
Luke 10:17-19

"As you go, proclaim this message: 'The kingdom of heaven has come near.' Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons. Freely you have received; freely give".
Matthew 10:7-8

"You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world" 1 John 4:4



ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURES TO STUDY

Psalms 23:4	Psalm 91:11
Ephesians 6:10-20	Hebrews 1:14
John 10:10	Colossians 1:13
John 8:42-47	1 John 5:18-19
John 16:33	John 14:12
Mark 5:1-20	Acts 16:16-18

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- When we study the scriptures through the lens of the spiritual realm, we can interpret the events of our life more clearly.
- We are the Kingdom of God and possess the power of God in us
- Remember who the real enemy is - Satan
- We are fighting a spiritual battle against the forces of evil every single day. But we are not alone! We have divine help from the Holy Spirit and the angels that are "sent to serve those who will inherit salvation"
- We do not need to fear Satan, demons or forces of darkness. Satan has already been defeated by the same Spirit of God that is in our life today

PRAYER FOCUS

"Lord, thank you for providing the truth regarding the spirit world in your Word. You defeated the enemy and provide us a way to battle him now. Thank you for your Holy Spirit and the authority that you've given us. Help us walk in that authority and be confident in the power that resides in us. Help us remember who the real enemy is and continue fighting spiritual battles with spiritual weapons. As freely as we have received, help us to freely give. Amen.



TRUTH

LIFE HACKS: LESSON 7

Confirmation bias - it's everywhere you look. We often don't want to seek truth because it may not support what we already believe. Instead, we search for data, studies and opinions that reflect and mimic what we already believe. And sadly, this doesn't just happen out in the world, but it has found a home within the Church as well.

What's even more worrisome is that within the Church, oftentimes the lies we believe start with a partial truth. A scripture there and a parable here that align with what I believe is "right", but we ignore other parts of Scripture that would maybe contradict our beliefs.

What is so dangerous about this is that we may even use a truth, but not seek the *entire* truth. Satan's best lies are based on truths which is why it can be so easy to be deceived. Even in the Bible, we see Satan quoting scripture in order to tempt Jesus. But Jesus knew the whole truth, and would combat Satan's attempts with "It is also written..."

Pair this with the fact that many confuse 'right and wrong' with what is true, and it's no wonder so many find themselves consumed with fighting worldly battles versus spiritual ones. Culture changes and what is considered 'right and wrong' change with the times. History has proven this time and time again. The truth, however, is absolute. It never changes. It's time to put aside what we are told is moral or right, and focus solely on what is true.

Where do we find this absolute truth? It's simple. The Word of God is the truth. Jesus himself said that he is "the way, the truth and the life". In John 8, Jesus expresses that if we are *truly* his disciples, we will hold to his teaching and in turn, know the truth and that it's that same truth that brings us freedom. If we are followers of Christ, we must ground ourselves in the Word - in the truth - and then in turn, learn to share this truth in love with the those around us.

Will you join me as we begin our journey as pursuers of truth?



GROUP DISCUSSION

1. How can we differentiate between what is right, wrong and what is true? Where do we find truth?
2. Romans 1:18-32 paints a picture of what happened to those who no longer followed God's truth. Does any of this sound familiar when we compare it to what our current culture looks like?
3. The truth without love is not the truth. If you are using truth as a weapon and to destroy and tear down others, it is not truth. What are your thoughts on showing the world truth, but *in love*?
4. We often find ourselves seeking only truths that fit our narrative or truth that supports what we already believe. Are you a pursuer of truth, or only that which supports your worldview? What can you do to improve and focus on seeking truth, even if it contradicts what you've believed up to this point?

SCRIPTURE

As you go through this study, I encourage you to read and study these scriptures with your group. They are a great starting point in the search for what truth is.

"For the time will come when people will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. They will turn their ears away from truth and turn aside to myths." 2 Timothy 4:3-4

"To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." John 8:31-32

"Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." John 14:6

"They exchanged the truth about God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator—who is forever praised. Amen."

Romans 1:25



ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURES TO STUDY

John 8:31-47	2 Timothy 4:2-5
John 18:28-19:16	Romans 1:18-32
Matthew 4:1-11	1 John 4:4-6
Ephesians 6:13-14	John 16:12-13

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Right and wrong change with time and as culture shifts, but the truth is absolute and never changes
- We often want to pick & choose which truths we believe based on what supports what we already believe. It's time to seek the full truth, even if it challenges what we've believed up to this point.
- We are a biblically illiterate church. We must change and be pursuers of the truth in order to have something firm to stand on when faced with tough questions
- Many believe God is holding out on us or that His truth isn't enough. But the truth is what sustains us and holds us together
- If we use truth as a weapon, it is not truth. It must be used in love.

PRAYER FOCUS

"Lord, thank you that the truth you provide us with never changes. Culture and what is right or wrong may change, but your Word and your promises never change. Please help your Word come alive and take root in my life, solidifying my wisdom and knowledge of your Kingdom. Help me battle the constant lies of the enemy and what the world would have me believe. Show me how to spread your truth and hope with those around me in love. Amen.



WORSHIP

LIFE HACKS: LESSON 8

The definition of worship has been diluted down into a genre of music. Instead of viewing worship as a part of our purpose and who we were created to be, it's become a certain sound and style of christian music. What's interesting is that the Word paints a fairly vibrant picture of what worship is and it turns out that it's a lot more than the first 20 minutes of a Sunday morning church service.

The world is filled with millions of other relationships, career aspirations and sports teams that try to attract our worship and distract us from the one who should be worshipped above all. We were created to worship so the reality is that we are all worshipping someone or something. Whatever you spend the most time thinking about, talking about and consuming (hellllloo social media), is what you worship most and if it's not God, you've just discovered the idol in your life.

Our worship is an act of expressed love. It allows us to ascribe worth to something and when we choose to ascribe worth to God above all else, it allows us to download the frequency of his heart. In this act of worship, we make the decision, each and every day to give God our heart and doing so allows our attitudes to align with the heart of the Father.

Throughout this Life Hack session, I challenge you to identify what you are currently worshipping and if it's not God first, then create a plan to realign with your created purpose to worship him. Allow the scriptures and discussion to guide you through the process of creating a worshipful lifestyle. Worship is anything that we do to express our love to God so get creative!



GROUP DISCUSSION

1. We were created to be worshippers and therefore are worshipping something. The question is, what are you worshipping? Discuss.
2. In Psalms 50, we see God telling the Israelites that he sees their sacrifice, but their heart wasn't really in it. Has your worship become more religion and routine than the process of giving God your heart? If so, how do you think we can address this?
3. Discuss the story of Paul & Silas singing in the prison. How do you think you would have responded after being beaten and flogged for doing ministry? How did their worshipful response impact the situation and those around them?
4. Worship is ascribing worth. We can ascribe worth to family and friends, but we must worship God the most. What can we do to ensure we keep a healthy balance?

SCRIPTURE

As you go through this study, I encourage you to read and study these scriptures with your group. They provide guidance on who to worship and how to worship.

"But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well." Matthew 6:33

"Do not worship any other god, for the Lord, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God." Exodus 34:14

"For the eyes of the Lord range throughout the earth to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to him..." 2 Chronicles 16:9

"Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded." James 4:7-8



ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURES TO STUDY

Exodus 20:4-6
Psalms 50:7-23
Acts 16:16-34
John 4:21-24

Psalms 139:14
Jeremiah 29:13
1 Peter 4:15-16
Psalms 29:2

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- God was very intentional in his design of the world and his design of us. He created us to be worshippers.
- Our worship truly identifies what is most important in our lives and whatever we worship then organizes the priorities in our lives
- Worship is a lifestyle. It's a decision we make every day - to give God our hearts
- Worship is an act of expressed love. When we worship, we are ascribing worth to the object of our worship
- During hard moments, we need to recognize the power of worship. When we do, God changes our perspective and our attitudes align with the heart of the Father.

PRAYER FOCUS

"Lord, thank you for creating us to be worshippers. God, we glorify your name, praise you and thank you for everything you've blessed us with. You are a good Father. We choose today to give our hearts to you in worship. Today, we choose to seek you first and ascribe worth to you before and above all else. We love you. Amen."



MISSION

LIFE HACKS: LESSON 9

From the moment that man was created, he was given a purpose; a responsibility. He was given an assignment. In fact, all of creation was created to fulfill a God-given assignment. When God created us, he created us intentionally and we will never feel fulfilled in life unless we first understand the importance of the mission given to us.

Unfortunately, many Christians struggle to understand and pinpoint what that assignment or mission is. They receive from the Lord but have no outlet, much like the Great Salt Lake. Without an outlet, they have become stagnant pools of living water. It's time for the Church to realize its mission and carry out the responsibilities set before us.

Throughout the Bible, we note various aspects of this mission. We are called to serve and care for the people around us. The Great Commission tells us that we are to go out and make disciples of all nations. Many times in the New Testament, Jesus tells the Church that we are destined to do even greater things on earth than he did. We've been given authority to heal the sick, raise the dead, and cast out demons.

Above all, God put us here to show people who He is. As you go through this session, I encourage you to self-reflect on the mission we have been given and assess if and how you are fulfilling it. Let's come together and tackle the assignment that we were intentionally and purposefully created for.



GROUP DISCUSSION

1. Like the Great Salt Lake, some believers have become containers full of stagnant water, because we receive but never share the living water that God has released into our lives. Self-reflect on this. Where do you fall? What can you do to ensure you're not becoming a stagnant pool of living water?
2. The video mentions that we are to contribute to society, and that as Christians, we bear even more responsibility to model this to those around us. Discuss.
3. We have been created for a mission. What is the mission?
4. The Great Commission given to the Church is to go out and make disciples. Are you making disciples? If not, what can you do to start making disciples?

SCRIPTURE

As you go through this study, I encourage you to read and study these scriptures with your group. The Word helps shed light on our purpose and mission on this earth.

"The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it." Genesis 2:15

"Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." Matthew 28:18-20

*"We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God."
2 Corinthians 5:20*



ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURES TO STUDY

Genesis 1:27-29

2 Corinthians 5:16-21

Mark 16:15-18

Matthew 28:16-20

John 14:12

Matthew 10:7-8

Matthew 5:13-16

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- All of creation was created to fulfill a God given assignment.
- The only one who can direct our path towards a fulfilling life is the one who created us.
- Our mission is a commission. We are to take this mission on alongside others and alongside God.
- We are called to be Ambassadors of Christ. We are to serve and care for people, make disciples, heal the sick, raise the dead, cast out demons and share hope, love and peace with people.
- It can be hard to know what our mission looks like in life. When we stop and surrender to God, a path appears.

PRAYER FOCUS

"Lord, thank you for creating us with a purpose and a mission. Please give us clarity on this mission and help us to focus on fulfilling all that you've called us to do. With all the distractions our world and culture have to offer, we ask that you provide us constant reminders of our commission. Let us show who you are to all those around us. We are the salt and light of the earth. Thank you God for being a partner and for creating a mission that we can do together, as believers. Amen.



STEWARDSHIP

LIFE HACKS: LESSON 10

The Bible is clear - Everything we have belongs to God. Over and over again, scripture states that the heavens, the earth and everything in it (including people!) belong to him.

So why is it that we often find ourselves believing the contrary? We think, "Well, it was my education and skill set that got me this job. And the hard work I do at my job has provided our home, vehicle and the clothing we wear. I deserve this and earned it all on my own". We may acknowledge that God created us, but have decided that the rest was accomplished on our own. We think that because resources are in our possession, that they are ours.

When we study the Word in relation to this, we realize that every single thing we have in this life has been given to us. And it's been given to us with the understanding that we will steward it. This doesn't just mean being responsible and "money-smart". Stewardship requires us to change the way we think and the way we view our earthly resources, which is more than just money by the way.

When we grasp what Jesus was trying to tell us every time he started a conversation with the phrase "The Kingdom of Heaven is like..." we realize that this world is not our home. We are passing through and everything that we have been given as a resource can be used to further his kingdom. Everything we have, we are called to steward and use to fulfill our mission.

When we change our thinking and steward all that we have in this way, we can use it to eternally impact the lives of people. It's always been about people.

What are you going to do with what you've been given?



GROUP DISCUSSION

1. Why do you think it's so difficult for us to grasp and believe the truth that everything we have belongs to God?
2. Discuss the Parable of the Talents. How did the Master decide how much to give each servant? What happened to those who were faithful with their talents?
3. We are all stewards and manage either as a son or slave. Discuss the difference between the two and identify where you fall between these two ways of stewarding.
4. What has God asked us to steward beyond monetary resources?
5. In Luke 12, Jesus tells a parable of a man who had much, but did not steward it by using it for the mission and to serve others. Discuss.

SCRIPTURE

As you go through this study, I encourage you to read and study these scriptures with your group. The Word is clear that God is the creator of earth and all that is in it belongs to him.

"To the Lord your God belong the heavens, even the highest heavens, the earth and everything in it." Deuteronomy 10:14

*"The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it;"
Psalms 24:1*

"for, "The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it." 1 Corinthians 10:26

*"For who makes you different from anyone else? What do you have that you did not receive? And if you did receive it, why do you boast as though you did not?"
1 Corinthians 4:7*



ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURES TO STUDY

Psalms 89:11

Matthew 25:14-30

Genesis 1:28

Luke 12:16-21

Luke 19:11-27

Genesis 2:15-17

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Nothing that we have is ours. All of it belongs to God.
- We don't own the resources, but we do own the responsibility of handling them.
- In order to get us to disobey God, Satan tries to get us to think that all we have is really ours and not God's.
- We are all stewards. We will manage as a son or a slave. A son manages out of a sense of love and a slave manages from an attitude of obligation.
- Steward your resources for the mission. It is God's plan for us to use all that he has given us to eternally impact the lives of people

PRAYER FOCUS

"Lord, we thank you for the many ways that you have blessed us. Show us how we can use each and every resource that you've given us to further your mission. Help us battle the mindset that anything we have is ours. We praise you for providing and blessing us. Show us how and who we can bless as we go through our week this week, and beyond. Thank you God. Amen.



MENTAL HEALTH

LIFE HACKS: LESSON 11

We are in the middle of a major mental health crisis. You don't have to research very long or hard to find numerous studies showing the rise in cases of mental illness. Sure, we may be more aware of how many people struggle with this than we were before, but statistics show that it is much more than that.

There are many speculations as to which variables in our health, family situations and culture attribute to this increase. It's important to take care of our brains physically and to acknowledge the role that society and social media play in this crisis so that we can adjust and better protect ourselves from harmful influence. But even more than that, as believers in Christ, we are armed with weapons that we can use to fight this spiritually as well.

There is incredible power in the words that are spoken over us - both by outside influence and by ourselves. The words said impact our thoughts, which is where we need to set up our strongest defense.

The Bible tells us that we can take every thought captive and make it obedient to Christ. It also tells us to think on things that are just, noble, lovely and true. We are the gatekeepers to our brains and determine who or what has access to our thought life.

Throughout this Life Hack, we will discuss steps that can be taken physically, socially and spiritually to defend ourselves against this crisis.

If you or someone you know is struggling with mental illness, please reach out to a parent, mentor, pastor or counselor for help. Do not battle this alone.



GROUP DISCUSSION

1. Mental illness is on the rise in a major way. What aspects of life or culture do you believe have played a part in this? Are there any solutions?
2. A 2018 study found that high school social media usage increased feelings of loneliness. What part do you believe social media has played in the mental health crisis we have in our country right now?
3. 2 Corinthians 10:4-5 reminds us that we are fighting a spiritual and mental battle and that we can bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ. What does this look like? How can you take captive your thoughts and speak truth to the situation?
4. What steps can we take to have better brain health? What does this look like? What goals can you set for yourself to begin this brain health journey?

SCRIPTURE

As you go through this study, I encourage you to read and study these scriptures with your group as they relate to Mental Health and how we can take certain steps to help bring better health to our minds.

"The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ." 2 Corinthians 10:4-5

"Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." Philippians 4:6-7



ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURES TO STUDY

Judges 6:11-12

John 14:27

Psalms 40:1-3

Philippians 4:6-8

2 Timothy 1:7

Jeremiah 29:11

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- We have all encountered mental illness at some point in our life - whether a personal struggle or with those that we love
- Social media has had an alarming affect on mental health in society
- There are steps we can take to bring better health to our brains, just like every other part of our bodies
- There is great power in what is spoken over us and what we speak over ourselves
- We can take captive every thought and make it obedient to Christ and the Word of God

PRAYER FOCUS

"Lord, we thank you for the promise of a sound mind and comfort and peace when we are struggling. Help us make decisions that will bring health to our brains and show us how to comfort and love those battling with mental health issues. Guide us in how to support one another. Lord, help us keep our minds on the things in your Word and take captive every thought that would deceive us. Amen.



PROMISES

LIFE HACKS: LESSON 12

The Bible holds over 7000 promises that God has made to us. And yet, this often doesn't bring as much hope and excitement as it should. It has become obvious that we no longer understand or trust in these promises. We often live and make decisions as though God is not going to fulfill his promises, even though the Word is clear that he always does.

So, why is this? One could say that we've allowed culture to sway how we view promises. Often, a promise is only held if the end outcome benefits the one who made it. Or sometimes a reward is given to those who did not fulfill the condition required to receive it. Society has created a world where contracts and promises do not mean anything anymore.

Another factor is that we don't understand God's promises fully. We may read a promise and claim this promise, seek God and ask for this promise and yet seemingly don't ever see it honored. We might not ever admit it, but we question whether God is trustworthy or not. When in reality, it may not have been fulfilled yet due to God's timing or more often than not, we miss the part where many promises in the Word are conditional. Even salvation is free, yet we must confess with our mouth and believe in our hearts in order to be saved.

This Life Hack shows you God's heart behind his promises and reminds us that he fulfills every promise he makes. We can trust in him and his word. And furthermore, we are called to be promise keepers as well, as we are made in his image. We can show the world who he is through our kept promises.



GROUP DISCUSSION

1. How do you think culture today has affected our viewpoint in regards to keeping promises?
2. In the video, the illustration of “promise cards” was given. Discuss the changes you think you’d see by those making promises if this was real.
3. Some of the promises in the Bible are conditional. Why do you think we struggle with conditional promises? Why do we fight against fulfilling our end of the promise?
4. Do you usually spend more time discussing, googling and meditating on your problem or the promise? What can you do to remedy this?
5. We were created in the image of God to be a promise keeping people. Discuss.

SCRIPTURE

As you go through this study, I encourage you to read and study these scriptures with your group as you discuss the many promises of God and the importance of knowing them.

“For no matter how many promises God has made, they are “Yes” in Christ. And so through him the “Amen” is spoken by us to the glory of God. ”

2 Corinthians 1:20

“Know therefore that the Lord your God is God; he is the faithful God, keeping his covenant of love to a thousand generations of those who love him and keep his commandments. ” Deuteronomy 7:9

“Not one of all the Lord’s good promises to Israel failed; every one was fulfilled.”

Joshua 21:45



ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURES TO STUDY

Joshua 21:43-45
Matthew 11:28-30
Matthew 6:33

Romans 10:9
Mark 11:22-25
Isaiah 40:29-31

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- God gave his promises not only to prove to us who he is and that he is the one doing it, but to prove how much we mean to him.
- The Bible contains over 7000 promises that God has given us
- It's vital to understand that some promises are conditional and that we must fulfill the condition to receive the promise
- When we trust the promises of God, we can walk through disappointments in life and know that God will be faithful to his word
- We were created in the image of God to be a promise keeping people. When we keep our promises, we represent the promise keeper in Heaven, on earth.

PRAYER FOCUS

"Lord, thank you for being a constant we can rely on in a world filled with broken promises. Give us wisdom and the discipline to learn your many promises and declare them over our lives. Soften our hearts to be open to the changes we need to make to fulfill our end of conditional promises and show us how we can be promise keepers as ambassadors of yours. Let the world see who you are through our credible word. We thank you God for all you've provided us within those promises. Amen.

