

Now let's add Christ to the same two questions:

3. If you were to assess how intentionally you are living for Christ, what criteria would you use?

4. Think of someone you believe lives or lived intentionally for Christ. What about this person strikes you as intentional?

5. Read 2 Corinthians 5:1-15 at least three times this week.

What did you learn about God?

What did you learn about people?



6. What does Philippians 3:20 say about our true home?

7. How does Philippians 3:20-21 connect with 2 Corinthians 5:1-4?

8. How would believing that you will be clothed with immortality (your new body won't decay) change what you think when you look in the mirror today? How would it change how you feel about your problems?

9. What is Paul communicating in 2 Corinthians 5:6-8? Do you honestly agree with him? Why or why not?

10. Read Hebrews 11:13-16. In what ways would your daily life be different if you lived "desiring a better country?"

11. In your life, who do you think you need to please? Whose approval do you most want? Whose rejection do you fear?

12. Read 2 Corinthians 5:9. What should be the focus of your efforts? Pray and ask the Holy Spirit to show you an area where you are pleasing him and a specific area of your life where you really aren't. Ask God this week to change your mind about that area and give you the strength to work on this. Write down your process here.

13. All people will face the Great White Throne Judgment, as written in Revelation 20:11-15. Believers in Christ will have the privilege of a second judgment before Jesus, where they will give an account of their lives. Read 2 Corinthians 5:10. How do you feel about appearing before the judgment seat of Christ to have him speak about how you have lived?

14. Read Romans 14:7-12 and 1 Corinthians 3:12-15. What else do you learn about the believers' judgment by Christ?

15. We spend significant time judging other people and, typically, less time assessing our own lives. In Matthew 7:3-5, Jesus tells people to pay attention to the log in their own eyes before inspecting the lives of other people. Considering that we will have to give Jesus an account of our lives, why is it right to first analyze ourselves, even if “the other person” is more at fault?

16. Read 2 Corinthians 5:14-15. What great news that we have the freedom to no longer live for ourselves but for Christ! In essence, Christ’s love keeps us from living for ourselves. But we all have a strong affinity to fight against this and to reorient our lives toward ourselves. In self-reflection, answer these questions:

• I struggle with living for Christ and prefer to live for myself in this way/situation:

• The reason I live for myself in this way is that I am trying to...

• What would living for Christ rather than for myself look like in this specific way?

MEMORIZE | 2 CORINTHIANS 5:9

Write it down in various places. Recite it to yourself as you are doing hard things and as you are doing mundane things. Make it your prayer. “God, I want to please you right now and not please

”



WEEK 2

We live intentionally for Christ when we experience suffering and, by faith, reframe our pain to an eternal perspective that includes the future weight of glory.

1. How do you typically deal with life when things aren't as you would choose?

2. What do you fear? What do you tend to worry about?

3. Read 2 Corinthians 4:7-18 at least three times this week.

What did you learn about God?

What did you learn about people?

4. Look at 2 Corinthians 3:18 and 4:1. Paul says, “Therefore we do not lose heart,” which means to be altogether despondent and just done with everything. What are the reasons Paul doesn’t lose heart? Feel free to look back further in chapter 3 if you want more context.

5. In verse 7, Paul says, “We have this treasure in jars of clay.” Looking at the context in 2 Corinthians 4:4-6, what is this treasure?

6. In 2 Corinthians 4:8-9, Paul uses this formula:

- We are hard-pressed on every side, BUT NOT crushed.
- We are perplexed, BUT NOT driven to despair.
- We are persecuted, BUT NOT abandoned.
- We are struck down, BUT NOT destroyed.

Consider disappointments or suffering that you are facing. If you were to create your own set of examples like Paul did, how would you fill in these blanks?

I am _____ but not _____.

I am _____ but not _____.

7. Read 2 Corinthians 12:1-10. Now reread 2 Corinthians 4:7-12. How does knowledge of Paul’s suffering in chapter 12 impact how you read this section in chapter 4?



7b. Has God ever given you something challenging, like a thorn in the flesh, that caused you suffering but ultimately brought you benefit? How did you respond in the middle of the pain?

8. In 2 Corinthians 4:8-14, notice the repetition of the words: death, dead, alive, life, faith, believe, speak. What do you think Paul is trying to communicate to the Corinthians?

9. As a representative of Christ, Paul was regularly persecuted. 2 Corinthians 4:10 tells us a reason why he would experience troubles. Through them, Jesus would show his life to those who were watching. In your brokenness, how have you been, or how can you be a witness to the life of Jesus?

10. Look at 2 Corinthians 4:17-18 and 5:1. Write in the left column the things that are temporary and the corresponding things that are eternal in the right column.

Temporary	Eternal

11. Reread 2 Corinthians 5:1-15. What is clearer to you now that you have studied 4:7-18?

12. What does Colossians 3:1-4 teach about Jesus?

About believers?

How might this understanding impact how you view your current life situation?

13. Read Hebrews 12:1-2. What is the advice for believers?

How did Jesus make it through his suffering?

How does 2 Corinthians 4:17-18 correlate with Hebrews 12:1-2?

14. Practicing “Lament” while suffering is one way to live intentionally for Christ. Someone once told me, “To complain is sin, but to complain to God is lament.” We need to learn a godly response to pain. Many troubles don’t let up quickly, so learning to please Christ in the middle of sorrow is an important part of Christian living.

Here is a “Typical Lament Pattern:”

1. Complain to God
2. Cry out to God. “God, do something about this!” (It may also include thanking Him.)
3. Give some praise to God, even if it is weak or uncertain.

Psalm 142 is a clear example and a great place to start if you are feeling sorrow and want to process it with God.

Try writing your own lament here:



WEEK 3

We live intentionally for Christ when we acknowledge our weakness in the face of temptation and seek God's faithful provision of an escape from things that seek to entrap our hearts.

1. Read 1 Corinthians 10:1-14 three times this week.

What did you learn about God?

What did you learn about people?

THIS IS THE CONTEXT OF CHAPTER 10:

The Corinthian church had an idolatry problem. In their culture, animals were sacrificed at pagan temples. Finding meat that had not been offered to idols was a challenge. Since many Corinthian Christians came from Gentile backgrounds, idol worship was their personal history and participating in meals in which the meat had been killed before an idol was a hot topic. In chapter 8, Paul deals with it directly. In chapter 9, he talks about giving up his own rights for others, suggesting that the Corinthians should be willing to do the same. Just before the start of chapter 10, he talks about disciplined living, suggesting they would need it to overcome their temptation to practice idolatry.

2. This passage has lots of Old Testament references. Looking at these will help you understand the connection between idolatry and temptation. (Spoiler Alert: We still have this problem today!)

VERSE	IMAGE	O.T. REFERENCE	WHAT DO YOU OBSERVE IN THE O.T.?
10:1	Under the cloud	Exodus 13:21-22	
10:1	Passed through the sea	Exodus 14:21-22	
10:3	Spiritual food	Exodus 16:13-15	
10:4	Spiritual drink	Exodus 17:5-6	
10:7	Do not be idolators...	Exodus 32:1-6	
10:8	We must not indulge in sexual immorality...	Numbers 25:1-9*	

*Numbers cites 24,000 dead. Paul refers to 23,000 who died in one day. The O.T. reference includes leaders from 25:4 who may not have died the same day.

10:9	We must not put Christ to the test...	Numbers 21:4-9	
10:10	Nor grumble	Numbers 14:1-4; 26-38	



3. Most Corinthian Christians were Gentile, not Jewish, yet Paul tells them stories about Israel. Paul writes:

“For I do not want you to be unaware... (10:1a);

“Now these things took place as examples for us...” (10:6a);

“Now these things happened to them as an example, but they were written down for our instruction...” (10:11a).

- What is Paul trying to communicate with these phrases?

- What application does this have for us today?

4. In 10:12, the verse starts off with the word “Therefore,” which indicates a logical connection of verse 12 with the previous argument. Explain the warning in 10:12.

5. How does the warning in 10:12 connect with the previous argument regarding the Israelites?

6. Answer the following three questions after reading these scriptures:

1 Corinthians 10:13 and James 1:13-16.

- What do you learn about temptation?

- What is God's role in temptation?

- What is our role?

7. 1 Corinthians 10:13 says God is faithful and He will provide the way of escape. We never need to give in to temptation and sin. How did God provide for the Israelites, even though most didn't listen to Him?



8. Uncovering Lies about God and Sin, Using 1 Corinthians 10:13

The following set of questions is taken from *Instruments in the Redeemer's Hands* by Paul Tripp, p 312. Read and meditate on the truth, as stated in the "Declaration." Then answer the following questions.

Declaration: No temptation has seized you except what is common to people.

Question: Where have you been tempted to think that your situation is unique and that you have been singled out for particular suffering?

Declaration: God is faithful.

Question: Where have you tended to believe that God has been unfaithful to His promises to you?

Declaration: He will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear.

Question: Where have you thought that you have been given more than you can handle or that the extreme pressures of the situation has caused you to sin?

Declaration: He will also provide a way out so that you can stand under it.

Question: Where have you tended to feel trapped, thinking you have no reasonable way to deal with your situation?

9. 1 Corinthians 10:14 warns us to flee (run away from) idolatry. How would you define modern-day idolatry in your culture?

10. Many times, the things that are most on our hearts are good desires. But even good desires can become an idol in our lives if we want them more than we want to honor God. List some of the things that you want, perhaps some things that remain unanswered prayers.

11. How do these desires sometimes control you?

12. Can you think of anything that if you don't get it, you won't be okay? "I can't be happy if _____ doesn't happen."

13. Considering what you just wrote, what do you see as your rights? What do you feel you deserve?

14. God gives us a way out of our temptations, but we often want the things that are tempting us. Write a prayer to God, confessing your need in a particular area. Ask him to give you the faith to believe He is faithful!



WEEK 4

We live intentionally for Christ when we recognize His purposes in our lives are good, and all things we experience are shaping us into His resurrected image.

LET'S RECAP THE LAST 3 WEEKS

1. We live intentionally for Christ when we make it our aim to please Him, knowing that He will rightly judge our lives.
2. We live intentionally for Christ when we experience suffering and, by faith, reframe our pain to an eternal perspective that includes the future weight of glory.
3. We live intentionally for Christ when we acknowledge our weakness in the face of temptation and seek God's faithful provision of an escape from things that seek to entrap our hearts.

1. Read Romans 8:28-39 three times this week.

What did you learn about God?

What did you learn about people?

2. Read Romans 8:28. Many things we experience or do are not good. What do you think Paul means when he says all things work together for good?

3. Read Romans 8:28 and 8:29 together. What is the good result of the “all things” in our lives?

4. How does God demonstrate intentionality in 8:28-30?

5. God originally made us in His image (Genesis 1:27). That image still exists in us, but sin has marred it. What does 1 Corinthians 15:49 tell us about the image we will be given?

6. In Romans 8:29, we are being conformed into the image of the Son through all the things in our lives. What is God’s purpose in this?

7. Look at the earlier context of Romans 8:14-17. What do we learn about who we are?

8. If all of us who love God will become the siblings of Christ, how might this impact how we intentionally live for Christ today?

9. In Romans 8:31, Paul asks, "What then shall we say in response to all these things?" How would you honestly answer?

10. Summarize in your own words Romans 8:31-39, then reread what you wrote and underline any phrases that are especially powerful to you.



Because God is in the process of conforming us to the image of the resurrected Christ and is committed to making us Christ's fellow heirs (siblings), we have a high calling to live for Him today.

11. What are your current plans, methods, and intentions trying to accomplish?

12. What are your priorities? (Take a look at how you spend your time and money.)

13. Do your current plans and priorities help you fulfill God's high calling in your life?



THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITY HELPS SORT OUT WHAT GOD IS ASKING YOU TO PRIORITIZE AS YOU INTENTIONALLY LIVE FOR CHRIST.

AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY VS. AREAS OF CONCERN
(adapted from *Instruments in the Redeemer's Hands*, p. 354).

STEP 1

ON A FULL SHEET OF PAPER, DRAW A LARGE CIRCLE AND LABEL IT "CONCERN."

Write down all the things that you are concerned about but are not your responsibility. These can be problems, relationships, or circumstances. List the areas in your life that keep you up at night, the things you wish you could change in other people, systemic issues in society that burden you, etc. It is an area of concern if it does not fall under your primary responsibility or capability to create change, including changing other people.

STEP 2

DRAW AN INNER, SMALLER CIRCLE, AND LABEL IT "RESPONSIBILITY."

Write down specific, God-ordained responsibilities that you cannot give to another person. These are things only you can rightfully do. Make sure you consider such things as aiming to please Christ, walking through trials, and fleeing temptation.

In the podcast, you will be given more information about Step 3, and your group facilitator will lead you through it. You will also have the opportunity to order some of your responsibilities and discuss how to address areas of concern.



