

# Transforming Your Inner World: Life Group Series

IDMC Australia

## Pastor's Message

Our vision for life groups is that they would be a place where we can build authentic, spiritual communities. That people would come together and focus on spiritually maturing and multiplying .

In a season where large gatherings are limited, I am drawn to Philemon 2:2, where Paul greets Philemon, Apphia and Archippus, and 'the church in [their] house'. Meeting in home groups is nothing new; it is an early church model.

This life group series is designed to be done in the church in your house. We are intentionally making small groups smaller so we can continue meeting face to face and create environments where micro groups of two or three couples can really share deeply and grow together.

So let us choose intentionality over convenience, as Hebrews 10:25 says,

'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.'

We are no longer doing life groups how they've been done in the past. We are building structure for release and growth, not control. The church is growing and we need each member to be a part of a loving small group.

If you're not already part of a life group, become part of one.

If your group needs a leader, step up to lead. Or take turns facilitating with the other couples in your group.

If there's no host, step out to open your house. Let the Lord be the provider and give us the grace to do this.

We invite you to come on this life group series, based on the IDMC College Semester 1 curriculum. Be part of an authentic biblical community and make a commitment to your spiritual growth. We cannot grow in spiritual maturity by ourselves. Even those who are a thorn in your side have been placed in your life to help mould and shape you.

Our mission statement for IDMC Life Groups is,

'We are committed to growing as an **authentic biblical community**, where **obedience to truth is practised together**; that results in spiritual maturity and spiritual multiplication.'

# Introduction

Each of us has a public world that everyone sees; a private world which our loved ones may see; and an inner world which only God sees. It is this inner world, our own vineyard that we will be examining over this series. We will learn how to take stock of our inner life, how to take charge of our inner life and how to take care of our inner life.

Together, we will discuss and explore:

- What is inner life? How to cultivate your inner life?
- What is discipleship from the inside out?
- The five processes of spiritual formation.
- How do you pursue a deep intimate relationship with God?
- The spiritual disciplines you must adopt into your life.
- How to live biblically and find balance in this busy world.

We are on a mission to be a church of intentional disciplemakers of a certain kind!

But before we disciple others, we must first allow ourselves to be disciplined by Christ Himself.

To do so, we must be:

1. Spiritual in orientation
  - a. God-centred orientation
  - b. Biblical worldview and Kingdom values
2. Strong in the Word and prayer (authenticity)
  - a. Abide (rootedness in the Scriptures)
  - b. Alignment (mastered by the Word of God)
3. Surrendered to Christ daily (brokenness)
  - a. Security (inward restedness—nothing to prove, hide and lose)
  - b. Stewardship (simplicity of life and open hand)
4. Sold out for His Cause (courageous)
  - a. Living with a sense of calling (marriage, ministry, marketplace, mission)
  - b. Walking in the spirit of faith (divine appointments & active obedience)

The church needs men and women who deeply understand discipleship from the inside out and are committed to becoming a certain kind of disciplemakers.

Authentic discipleship to Jesus and intentional disciplmaking of a certain kind are the biblical keys to raising up spiritually mature men and women in the kingdom of God!

"I commend solitude to any of you who are seeking salvation, first, that you may study well your case as in the sight of God. Few men truly know themselves as they really are. Most people have

seen themselves in a looking-glass, but there is another looking-glass, which gives true reflections, into which few men look. To study one's self in the light of God's Word, and carefully go over one's condition, examining both the inward and the outward sins, and using all tests which are given us in Scriptures, would be a healthy exercise; but how very few care to go through it!"

- Charles Spurgeon

# Session #1: Building a Solid Foundation

## Watch!

Link to video: <https://youtu.be/XqNJjAF0grY>

## Study!

The world celebrates and glorifies the external. The world thinks less about the internal. The same secular thinking has infiltrated the church. We are so driven by the eternal, we tend to ignore the internal. We are driven by accomplishments, we tend to undermine authenticity. We are focused on capacity development, we tend to overlook character development. We are driven to advance the Kingdom, we forget to abide in the King. We think about our calling in terms of advancement of the Kingdom, when our first and foremost calls us alignment to the King. Like the bride in Song of Solomon, we have looked after other people's vineyards and gardens, but our own vineyard and garden, we have neglected.

"They made me keeper of the vineyards, but my own vineyard I have not kept!" (Song of Solomon 1:6)

Cultivating a deep inner life is a long-term process of renewal from the very core of our beings—enlightening our worldview with biblical perspectives and exchanging our core values for Kingdom values!

We need to examine ourselves in the light of God's Word and calibrate our hearts to God's heart—something like spiritual heart surgery, bringing alignment to God's own heart.

During this lesson, we will understand the biblical significance of tending to our own inner life and how we can do this practically. We should develop a willingness to be authentic before God and to each other in examining our inner life, and commit to growing in this area.

**Scripture Focus:** Matthew 7:24-29 (Pay attention to contrasts and similarities.)

24 "Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. 25 The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. 26 But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. 27 The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash." 28 When Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were amazed at his teaching, 29 because he taught as one who had authority, and not as their teachers of the law.

### **Lesson Framework:**

To Jesus, the most important thing in life is it's foundation!

There are three profound lessons we learn from this passage:

## A. There is A Great Difference Between Hearing And Doing God's Word

"Truth doesn't change lives, truth applied changes lives!"

- Rev Edmund Chan

"When we hear the truth and we do not apply, we lose the capacity to apply the truth altogether."

- C. S. Lewis

## B. Your Foundation Is Often Unseen But Is Evident In Times Of Crisis

"When people are in a crisis, they often question the goodness of God rather than trusting in the Godness of God!!"

- Rev Paul Jeyachandran

## C. A Life Built On The Word Will Ultimately Stand

How do we build life on the Word?

1. Hearing the Word
2. Reading the Word
3. Studying the Word
4. Memorising the Word
5. Meditating the Word
6. Confessing the Word
7. Applying the Word

In life, we gravitate toward the visible and spectacular.

We judge and pride ourselves upon our influence and accomplishments. That is what we call superstructures, things that are easily visible.

The **Superstructure** represents the outward accomplishments of our life, work and ministry. It is built by competence and skill. It lasts only if the substructure is solid and proper structures are in place to support it.

The **Structure** represents the areas that we need to guard in our personal life, that is, time with God, family, friends and community. It is built on conduct and through our repeated actions. Without these, the building would be haphazard and shaky.

The **Substructure** is who we are, and what we do when no one sees. It is a life of worship, lived before God in the fear of Him and held together by humility, wisdom and perseverance. It is built on character and requires authenticity. You grow in it by firmly anchoring in God through the practice of the spiritual disciplines; it is the work of a lifetime and what really matters.

Our true strength lies in the substructure, the unseen foundation. Without a deep and stalwart substructure, the structures cannot hold. And the superstructures cannot rise to great heights without peril.

In summary,

- Our **Superstructure** is built on Competencies, it's all about remarkable accomplishments.
- Our **Structure** is built on Conduct, it's all about repeated actions.
- Our **Substructure** is built on Character, it's all about real authenticity.

When we take care of the depth of our lives, God will take care of the breadth of our work and ministry.

## Reflect!

What is the foundation of your life? Upon what are you building?

To answer this, take time to reflect on the below five questions:

1. How are we **pursuing** the truth?
2. How are we **pondering** and **processing** the truth?
3. How are we **practising** the truth?
4. How are we being **purified** by the truth?
5. How are we **passing** on the truth?

Let's resolve to build a solid foundation in life!

## Discuss!

The tallest building in the world, the Burj Khalifa in Dubai, rises more than 2,700 feet (822 metres)—over half a mile high. It has 160 floors and is twice as tall as the Empire State Building in New York City. It is home to the world's fastest elevator that travels at 40 miles per hour (64 km/hr). The Burj Khalifa also hosts the world's highest outdoor observation deck (on the 124th floor) and the world's highest swimming pool (on the 76th floor). But the secret to the stability of this massive building is found underground. Before construction began to rise up, workers spent a year digging and pouring the massive foundation that supports the building. The foundation contains some 58,900 cubic yards (45,032 square metres) of concrete weighing more than 110,000 tons. The building is safe because the foundation is solid.

Q: Read Matthew 7:24-29 together. What do you think Jesus meant when he said everyone who hears these words of mine and does them is like a wise man who built his house on the rock?

Q: What are good structures and substructures that we should intentionally build in our lives?

Q: To build on bedrock, we must dig deeper than the surface soil. What distractions prevent us from building our lives on this solid foundation?

Q: If you could identify one area of a weak foundation in your life, where you've built on sand instead of rock, what would it be?

Q: Discuss practical ways to build a strong foundation in the Word.

Q: With your group, would you like to make a commitment to focus on strengthening your foundations together throughout this study series?

Q: Reflect for a minute and write down some specific actions you'd like to commit to this coming fortnight. Share with your group and pray together with one another.

## Between Sessions

### Challenge!

SOAP is a way of reading your Bible and applying what you read in a practical way. SOAP stands for:

**S:** The S stands for **scripture**— you physically write out the scripture. You'll be amazed that what God will reveal to you just by taking the time to slow down and actually write out what you are reading!

**O:** The O stands for **observation**—what do you see in the verses that you're reading? Who is the audience? Is there a repetition of words? What words stand out to you?

**A:** The A stands for **application**—this is when God's Word becomes personal. What is God saying to me today? How can I apply what I just read to my own personal life? What changes do I need to make? Is there an action that I need to take?

**P:** And finally P stands for **prayer**. Pray God's Word back to Him. If He has revealed something to you during this time in His Word, pray about it. Confess if He has revealed some sin that is in your life.

If you haven't already, get yourself a journal to write in. Your journal can either be a physical or electronic one. The important thing is to set aside time each day to read through your bible and spend time with His Word. Set a goal for yourself to add one journal entry each day before the next Life Group meeting. Be prepared to come and share your experience and how God may have been speaking to you through your journaling.

### Memorise!

Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock.

(Matthew 7:24, ESV)