LESSON FOUR

Group participants, please note:

*If you are just joining this training, be sure to access **Lesson One** at ellencastillo.com, download it, put it in a binder, and read through it thoroughly before beginning the current lesson.*

*Reading through **Lesson Two** as soon as possible would also be very helpful.*

The remaining lessons stand alone and can be done along with your group.

ONE-ANOTHER CARE in Your Family

(Marriage, Parenting, and Sexuality)

God has ordained the family and teaches us in His Word how we are to treat one another Biblically in the context of family life.

Family life is a place of great struggle for many. The divorce rate is higher than ever before, including in the church. There is absenteeism of parents, a breakdown of authority, preoccupation with material things, lack of time together, financial pressures due to a struggling economy, and many other problems. God's Word teaches that the institution of family is of divine origin (Genesis 1:26-27; Genesis 2:7; Genesis 2:21-22). It also teaches that it has a divine purpose (Genesis 2:18; Matthew 19:4-6; Genesis 1:28; Psalm 127:3-5). The only true hope for recovery of family life is a commitment to the Bible's teachings. Specifically, for our study of One-Another relationships, what does the Bible say about our family relationships?

It will help us to consider our own hearts instead of focusing on politics, hot-button topics, and popular culture. It is tempting to impart our opinions in these areas to our mentees, but we must guard against that and keep God's Word front and center at all times. As obvious as that sounds, it is easy to get sidetracked by a culture that steers us away from God's Truth.

MARRIAGE

Marriage issues are one of the most common reasons people seek help in the church. Some couples benefit from a mentoring relationship with another couple, while others benefit from having separate mentors, a woman for the wife and a man for the husband. These decisions take careful consideration and are largely dependent on the issues at hand. Church leadership can help determine what is best for a struggling marriage.

Many topics in the realm of marriage will benefit from mentoring. Many issues require more than mentoring (such as a marriage intervention ministry, marriage counseling, and individual counseling.) Sometimes, these needs will be out of the range of your training as a mentor. Know when to help someone seek other help, and then you can continue to be a mentor/encourager/friend and walk alongside them in the process they are in. To discern that you need to get more help for someone than you can offer, you must gauge your own mentoring experience, any training you have had, your comfort level, and overall knowledge on a particular topic.

We are only covering a few marriage needs that you might encounter in your ministry. It is a topic that requires much more time and care than we can offer in this training, but let's just touch on a few of the more challenging aspects of marriage in this lesson.

One of the most common subjects in church life regarding the family is "What about submission?" Ephesians 5:15-33 is a familiar passage that deals with the concept of submission. The discussion of submission can become heated and disunifying in many churches. There are varying viewpoints and interpretations on topics like complementarian and egalitarian doctrines and how these apply in the church and our homes. The purpose of our One-Another study is not to stir these things up but rather for us to consider our marriage relationships and how to guide mentees in theirs. If you need further understanding of this topic, you will benefit from a deep study of this passage. We will not spend the time here to debate the views on submission, but you are encouraged to be sure that you align with the church you attend and can help men and women accordingly. If you do not align with your church teachings, and your conscience will not allow you to teach what they teach (on this or any topic), discuss this with your spouse and church leaders.

Commit to studying God's Word (not human or worldly opinion) on this matter of submission, but be sure you understand the concept carefully. This passage is often wielded as a weapon against women in abusive marriages (particularly where hyper-headship is practiced and domestic oppression results.) If you take bits and pieces from the passage and misapply them, you will potentially harm rather than help in one-another care. If you are unsure what oppression is or how to discern abuses someone shares with you, seek assistance. Those who are experienced in such cases know what to look for and how to assess the situation when you don't have the experience.

What concerns do you have on the topic of submission as it pertains to mentoring ministry?

A few words about abuse: Abuse is not always physical, and it is not always apparent to others. When a person tells you that they are being abused, it is critical that you call on others to help you discern the need. Their story needs to be heard and a plan put forth to help both the abused and the abuser. This is not just the role of a mentor; it is the

role of church leadership. Often, a counselor is also a vital and helpful person to consult. The word "abuse" is a loaded one in our culture. We want to be sure that we do all we can to listen, care, discern, and wisely approach accusations. We also want to be sure that we do all we can to give opportunity for confession and repentance, wisely approaching confessions of guilt while protecting the abused (physically and emotionally.) These are complex scenarios, and a mentor should not handle them alone. Seek help from church leadership, trained counselors, and/or outside counsel.

It takes courage and vulnerability for an abuse victim to come forward. Someone rarely lies or fakes this (it could happen, but this is far less common than you might think.) When considering how to love people best, we can look to 1 Corinthians 13 and the words about love, "always hopes." We honor one-another by taking someone at face value, believing what they say unless (or until) there is evidence and proof otherwise. If we approach a potential abuse victim with skepticism and judgment, imagine the damage that could be done to their ability to trust church help. Please be kind and use good questions as you discern the real issues at hand. Having a second person alongside you in this kind of conversation can be helpful. Again, ask for help from someone with more experience in these matters. If we are going to err, it is better to err on the side of kindness and taking someone at face value than erring on the side of misjudging a situation and even potentially victimizing a victim even more (by essentially accusing them of being a liar.) We must be so careful in these situations.

Look to the resource suggestions for beneficial books on domestic oppression and abuse. It is good to become more educated on this all-too-common (and often hidden) problem in our churches.

DIVORCE

When a mentee is considering divorce, this is another area where it is best to call on church leadership for guidance. You can walk alongside an individual in the process of a biblical divorce as an encourager. In the case of a potentially unbiblical divorce, do not mentor someone without leadership guidance. Know your church's beliefs about divorce, and if you disagree, be sure to discuss that with them. There are varying opinions about what constitutes a biblical divorce but generally accepted biblical reasons are abandonment and adultery. Abuse is a third reason, which some will put under the heading of abandonment. There is much more that could be said, but for our purposes, knowing when to get help from counselors and leaders is your most helpful tool. If you encounter this often, do a deeper scripture study on divorce; it will give you further equipping along with our suggested resources.

One mistake is often made when mentors and other helpers are helping someone wanting out of their marriage due to being mistreated in some way, and the helper

doesn't think that is warranted. So, they say something like, "Please don't give up on your marriage, don't leave your spouse." Or, "God hates divorce." Remember, we do not know everything! Abuses can be hidden, and underlying dynamics that you have not seen at this point might exist. Victims sometimes withhold information out of fear – fear of being misunderstood or not believed, fear of retaliation by their spouse, etc. Your heart is in the right place when you say "please don't leave your marriage" because we don't like to see anyone get a divorce. We interpret "God hates divorce" as if it is the worst thing that could happen to this couple. In reality, the worst thing that could happen is that we have shamed or scared someone into staying put in an abusive dynamic. If there truly is abuse, and you have inadvertently made the victim feel misunderstood and alone, they might not accept your help, or worse yet, they might stay in an abusive situation out of guilt or fear of losing your help and respect. Call in some other help in such cases.

What scriptures come to mind when you think about "divorce"? Jot them down, and explain how you might use that scripture to encourage a mentee seeking a biblical divorce.

What would do if your mentee seeks your advice about their desire to divorce without biblical cause?

SINGLENESS

Sometimes, a single person might struggle with the unmet desires of marriage and family. Not all single people deal with this, of course, but when they do, a mentor can help them focus on their heart instead of just on circumstances. So many layers of struggle can impact these situations – discontentment, impatience, distrust in God's sovereign plan, poor relationship choices, loneliness, fear of man, insecurity, identity, and more. There will be areas of sinfulness to address and areas of suffering to show compassion and care. It is important to dig through those layers and address the heart issues specific to the individual.

Sometimes, singles feel set aside or not included in church life. It is natural that churches tend to focus on families, but when this focus comes at the expense of making everyone feel important and included, a mentor can step in and fill a gap.

It is most important to talk about identity in Christ at the start. There may be practical help to give as well, but our primary role as mentors is to disciple. Overcoming singleness is not the goal. The goal is sanctification, developing Christlikeness amidst life's circumstances and struggles!

If a mentee is struggling heavily with several aspects of singleness, it is best to find a mentor who is also single and is a little bit further down the road in that journey. Your marriage might present an inadvertent stumbling block to the mentee (not always, but use discernment here to offer what is best for that mentee!)

What scriptures might you use to encourage or teach a mentee struggling as a single, wishing they were married? Jot some down here:

PARENTING

This topic deserves an entire lesson, but for the sake of time and space, we will briefly consider it in this lesson about family.

Scripture also teaches us how we, as parents, relate to our children. Note what each of the following Scriptures says about our role as parents. If you are not a parent, you will benefit from looking at these verses because you are likely to engage in One-Another relationships with mentees who are parents. You might also become a parent someday.

*Deuteronomy 6:6-7

*Proverbs 22:6

*Ephesians 6:4

*2 Timothy 1:5

If you are a parent, as you mentor a struggling parent, you can offer them biblical truth and your experience. There is no formula for parenting to pass on, but there are biblical commands, promises, and principles, as well as your experience.

Situations that involve parenting children with special needs, sexual identity or related struggles, psychiatric and serious mental health concerns, and other complex scenarios often require referring someone for more trained help from a counselor or professional. At the very least, a team of helpers is best. You can include the child's teachers, youth workers, other family members, and friends who have walked a similar path. While the parent receives various kinds of help, your role is that of encourager, helping the parent focus on their heart, thinking biblically, and applying the gospel.

Mentoring parents requires transparency as a mentor and a willingness to share your story. What worked for you, what didn't? How did you find encouragement and refreshment? When you think about what might encourage another parent you are mentoring, these are questions to consider.

Do you have a go-to verse or passage about parenting that often comes up in conversations with parents? What is it? Why is it beneficial, according to your experience? (There are many potential answers to this, of course.)

RELATIVES

Of course, there are other One-Another relationships within families, with relatives who are not part of your immediate family. As you learn more about the One-Anothers, you will see how the same principles and Truths will apply to your relatives and anyone else that God places in your life.

One of the common mentoring needs with relatives is the need for peacemaking. We will cover this concept in a future lesson. A mentor can serve as a type of mediator in a family situation at times, and the peacemaking principles we will go over later can be very helpful.

PRIORITIZING FAMILY

You may have often heard it said that we should prioritize our lives something like this:

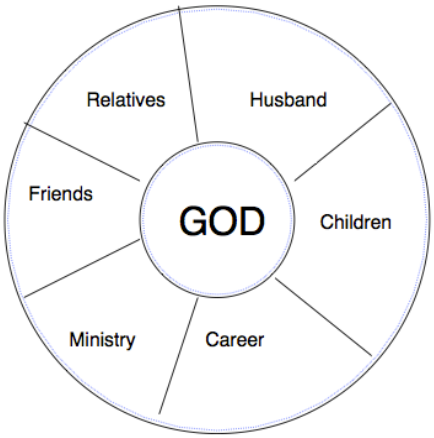
God first.
Spouse second.
Children third.
Career fourth.
Church/ministry fifth.
Friends and relatives sixth.

There are varying versions of this concept, with Scriptures that seem to support it (sometimes *eisegesis*, sometimes *exegesis*). The problem with a list like this is that it implies that if you run out of time or energy before getting to the bottom of the priority list, then it's ok to forego that priority. Where is that supported in Scripture? It isn't.

There is another way of looking at this idea of prioritizing God and people. 1 John 3:23 indicates that we can't love God and not love people, and we can't love people if we don't love God. It is not a matter of prioritizing; it is a matter of love. Every single One-Another verse or passage in Scripture backs up this concept. This is a better way of viewing our Christian priorities:

God is at the center of everything, and anything else in life flows from His presence in our lives through the indwelling of His Holy Spirit. We cannot have Biblical One-Another relationships without a relationship first with God. We cannot have a relationship with God and avoid having a relationship with each other. Everything we have — family, career, ministry, friends —are gifts from God, and we are to be stewards

of them. (this original diagram was created for women, but you could imagine "significant other" or "wife" instead of "husband.")



Psalm 8:4-8 reminds us that God made everything and He owns everything, but we have responsibility for caring for what He gave us.

> *"what is a human being that you remember him,*
> *a son of man that you look after him?*
> *5 You made him little less than God[b][c]*
> *and crowned him with glory and honor.*
> *6 You made him ruler over the works of your hands;*
> *you put everything under his feet:*
> *7 all the sheep and oxen,*
> *as well as the animals in the wild,*
> *8 the birds of the sky,*
> *and the fish of the sea*
> *that pass through the currents of the seas." (Psalm 8:4-8).*

As you minister in One-Another relationships with your family, ensure you are not neglecting one area of the God-centered circle of priorities for the sake of the other. It is not a matter of prioritizing; it is a matter of stewardship of your time, energy, resources, and gifts. The emphasis you can place on any given area will change according to the season of life you are in, but none of the areas are meant to be ignored entirely. God does not assign you activities or people to overwhelm you. If you are overwhelmed and unable to have a healthy One-Another lifestyle in your family, either you are taking on things that are not from Him in the first place, or you are not stewarding them well.

When we discuss family life with mentees who are overwhelmed by their busy lives, there are often opportunities to present this viewpoint of priorities.

Take a few moments to evaluate your family relationships. Ask God to reveal anything that hinders you from managing your lifestyle to His glory. Then, mentor others to do the same. Write down any thoughts here.

SEXUALITY

This topic is not necessarily always related to family, but it does tend to heavily impact families in various ways, so we need to address it briefly here. We will not go in-depth because, for the most part, caring for someone in sexual sin of any kind will mean caring as part of a team of some sort. A deeper dive would require a separate lesson on sexuality, but for now, let's consider how it relates to family. We live in contentious times regarding sexuality. A mentee who is deeply struggling with pornography, same-sex attraction and homosexuality, gender dysphoria, adultery, and other sexual challenges will often benefit from individual counseling with an experienced counselor who upholds a Christian worldview or from a Christian program or support group geared towards walking alongside those struggling with sexual sin.

A mentor can play a role in the struggler's life even if the mentee is in separate counseling or a support group situation. One of the supportive things a mentor can do is to offer accountability. The other supportive role they can play, simply put, is that of a friend. A friend who can offer understanding and one-another love and does not judge, but does speak the truth in love when appropriate.

If a person is attending church and asking for help to change (whether it is a desire to change sexual behavior, stop using pornography, understand their identity, etc), it is recommended that you not be the only one helping them in many cases. These struggles are very difficult to overcome, and the person will benefit most from having other people involved in their discipleship. A pastor, leader, mature church member, small group leader, family members, etc., can play a part in this team approach where the person is loved well and encouraged in their change and growth. It is unwise to be anyone's sole confidant. If someone asks you to keep their struggles secret, do not

agree to this. You can keep a confidence and privacy only to a point (see Lesson One on confidentiality and privacy.) These struggles, generally speaking, are too serious to risk being the only one offering advice, care, counsel, and help because this is a sensitive topic where opinions (and eisegesis!) can be tempting for a mentor. Use wisdom and discernment, and develop a support team for your mentee. (note, an individual with a pornography struggle often can benefit from a 1:1 mentoring relationship rather than a team, if the mentor is experienced in these very common situations.)

PLEASE CONSIDER THIS:

When mentoring someone with sexual identity concerns of any kind, please remember that their sexual preferences, identity, or behavior is not the most important thing about them. The most important thing about them is – do they know Jesus and if so, are they being discipled?

If they do know Jesus, He will do the work in their heart. Your role is to disciple them in that journey of heart change, and the topic of their sexual sin or identity may or may not be the focus they need right then. The goal is not "gay to straight". The goal is sanctification and heart change, just like with anyone else. Sexual struggles are very difficult to change, and it takes time. In some cases, their desires may not change as you mentor them, even if they want them to. Focusing on the heart's core (thoughts, beliefs, and desires) must still be what drives your mentoring, but this will take patience and – kindness.

The temptation for many who disciple is to encourage behavior modification instead of heart transformation. They get caught up in the idea that a person's sexuality is their identity, but we know better. Identity is rooted in Christ, not in one's behavior. Behavior change eventually comes from heart change and repentance. If someone has not repented, behavior change might appear to be good, but it does nothing to restore them to Christ. *1 John 1:9*. There is a time for fleeing immorality, and it is good to encourage this, but the fleeing alone does not change the heart. *1 Thessalonians 4:3-5*. Discipleship requires mentors to highlight the importance of sanctification and holiness in the mentee's life, at the heart level. *1 Corinthians 6:18*

There are varying opinions about whether same-sex desire is a sin, or if it only a sin if acted upon. Christians debate these things and all sides seem to back up their views with scripture to support their differing views. As a mentor, it is not important to prove your point of view. What is important is that you have discussions and look at scripture that targets the heart's thoughts, beliefs, and desires and trust The Lord to convict and direct your mentee. Desires do not tend to change as readily as we hope they will (generally, of course there are many exceptions!) But someone with certain desires can

certainly avoid acting upon them while seeking God's help. You can encourage this, hold a mentee accountable, but do not focus only on the behavior struggles.

A mentor does not change a heart. Only God can do that.

Give it patience, time, understanding, and trust God for the results.

Some people are uncomfortable addressing sexual sin and sexual identity-related struggles. This is unfortunate, because it often perpetuates an "us vs. them" mentality in the church. We have a level playing field at the cross, let's remember that and be….kind.

In your experience, do churches offer a welcome space for someone who struggles with their sexuality? Why or why not?

Do you have any particular personal feelings about counseling those with sexual identity struggles? Explain:

SUGGESTED RESOURCES for Family, Sexuality, Parenting

Behind the Veil, by Warren Lamb (along with the study guide)

Give Them Grace: Dazzling Your Kids with the Love of Jesus, by Elyse Fitzpatrick and Jessica Thompson

7 Myths About Singleness, by Sam Allberry

Singleness: Living Faithfully Christ (31-Day Devotionals for Life), by Jenilyn Swett

The Meaning of Marriage: Facing the Complexities of Commitment with the Wisdom of God, by Tim and Kathy Keller

Marriage and the Mystery of the Gospel, Ray Ortlund

Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage: Critical Questions and Answers, by Jim Newheiser

What Did You Expect? Redeeming the Realities of Marriage, by Paul Tripp

Sex in a Broken World: How Christ Redeems What Sin Distorts, by Paul Tripp

Do Ask, Do Tell, Let's Talk: Why and How Christians Should Have Gay Friends, Brad Hambrick

Child Proof: Parenting by Faith, Not Formula, by Julie Lowe

Parenting Is More Than a Formula, by Jim Newheiser

Parenting: 14 Gospel Principles That Can Radically Change Your Family, by Paul Tripp

Show Them Jesus: Teaching the Gospel to Kids, by Jack Klumpenhower

Leading Your Child to Christ: Biblical Direction for Sharing the Gospel, by Marty Machowski,

Be sure to visit the website for an updated, extended list of resource suggestions!

HOPE and HELP for Worry, Fear, Anxiety and Stress

Remember to APPLY THE GOSPEL and THINK BIBLICALLY as you share hope with One-Another.

Anxiety — along with fear, worry, and stress — are things that all human beings struggle with. They are closely related; therefore, in this lesson we will put them all under the term "anxiety." Anxiety takes on various forms, and people's responses to it take on various forms. Anxiety is *the prolonged sensation of fear in response to a perceived threat against oneself.* Fear, by definition, is *a self-protective tool to help a person sense and respond to a perceived danger*. We see this in Psalm 55:3-6:

"because of the enemy's words,
because of the pressure of the wicked.
For they bring down disaster on me
and harass me in anger.
4 My heart shudders within me;
terrors of death sweep over me.
5 Fear and trembling grip me;
horror has overwhelmed me.
6 I said, "If only I had wings like a dove!
I would fly away and find rest."

From the Psalmist's viewpoint, he is anxious due to threats from the enemy. He is terrified of death and danger, and he perceives escape to be the best solution. This passage is a vivid example of what some might call an "anxiety attack" or "panic attack."

While it is a common human experience to be anxious, it can be debilitating. We must think Biblically about anxiety so that it will not interfere in our relationships, damage our ability to engage in daily activities, or consume our thought life. It is natural to feel worried or troubled about things in life that are indeed worrisome or troubling! It is not easy, however, to be so consumed with it that it overtakes your trust in the Lord.

Is anxiety sin? Jot down your thoughts here.

Note: Anxiety that brings on a panic attack is serious, and this would be an appropriate time to urge someone to seek counseling. The counselor is trained for and skilled to know how to best advise someone like this. Often, they will require a medical evaluation to rule out any physiological causes, and to evaluate for the appropriateness of medication. Medications can be a controversial topic, too, but we are not qualified to advise or guide someone on medical issues. It is not appropriate to give your opinion on whether or not someone has a disorder, diagnosis, or medical need. We do not know everything and it is not our job to judge these matters. Common grace is available for these situations.

Remember, the person who struggles with anxiety, whether medical or not, still benefits from discipleship on matters of anxiety. Medical care and One-Another care can go hand-in-hand to acknowledge the whole person (some refer to us as "embodied souls", meaning both the physical and spiritual must be acknowledged in our care ministry.)

It can be helpful to realize that research is continually influencing how mental health is diagnosed and treated. We must 'stay in our own lane' as mentors, keeping in mind that we do not know everything there is to know. There are strong opinions on mental health in the church at large these days, but unless you are a medical professional or scientist, we are out of our lane if we push our opinions and ideas on to others. We can be wrong, and end up harming someone rather than helping. Our advice and care is not medical.

If your anxious mentee is unable to complete normal daily routines, or if their well-being is impacted in any negative way, it is best to refer them to a counselor who will know how to direct them for care. It is, as always, important to encourage them to get regular checkups and fill their trusted medical provider in regarding their anxiety, depression, or any other mental health struggle. Sometimes, anxiety is caused by physiological issues that only a medical provider can diagnose

We are complex beings, and we cannot simplify the struggle of anxiety. Is an emotion sin? No. Are there potential sinful reactions to it? Yes. Is that always the case, or is it sometimes simply 'being human' and not necessarily 'sin'? Let's talk more about this here and in future lessons as we look at a variety of emotional struggles.

Again, science and the medical field is constantly learning new things about our brains, minds, and bodies and how they are interrelated. We, as mentors, must stay in the lane of discipleship and remember that we do not know everything on a topic like anxiety and the brain. We do know what the bible says, and we can help others to grow in their trust in The Lord, but we cannot address their potential medical needs. Some medical problems do lead to anxiety, or a tendency towards being anxious. There may be some

kind of diagnosis involved, and a need for medical intervention. This is up to a mentee's medical professional, and we must encourage them to take care of their bodies. This includes having a check-up, expressing concerns to a medical professional, and taking that advice. We can remain alongside the mentee and discipleship no matter what root causes may or may not be discovered. Our lane is always discipleship, which everyone who is a believer needs!

How does the gospel apply to someone with anxiety? What comes to mind?

Look up the following verses, and write down what they say to us about stress, worry, fear and anxiety:

*Isaiah 26:3
*Philippians 4:4-9
*Matthew 6:25-34
*Romans 8:32
*1 Corinthians 10:13
*Romans 12:2
*Philippians 2:20
*1 Peter 5:7
*1 Thessalonians 5:18
*Philippians 4:12
*1 Timothy 6:6-8

This is not an exhaustive list! Can you think of other verses that speak to how we can deal with our anxieties and how the gospel applies? List them here:

Now that you have considered a biblical view of anxiety and how to help an anxious mentee, has your response to the question "is anxiety sin" changed at all? What about other emotions, are they sin? (Depression, fear, anger, etc)? Write your thoughts here:

The heart of anxiety:

As you face your own anxiety (we all do to varying degrees), and as you mentor someone who is anxious, look at their worries and fears at the heart level. What are they thinking, believing, and desiring that is feeding such anxiety? Address how their thinking, believing, and desiring need to change in order to apply the gospel and think more biblically about their anxiety. Be patient, this is a process and journey for most people who struggle deeply. It can sometimes vary in severity depending on circumstances, but it can also pop up when life seems calm and things are going well. It is an intricate emotion that requires tender care and….kindness.

Offering Hope About Worry, Fear, Anxiety and Stress, CASE STUDY:

Remember: focus on and incorporate our two key phrases as you work on this case – APPLY THE GOSPEL and THINK BIBLICALLY.

(If it helps you think it through, remember to mentally insert your own gender into these case studies as you read. The genders in the cases may vary, but the concepts generally remain the same regardless of gender.)

Sherry is a woman who just started attending your church (or, imagine this is a single dad instead.) You notice that she sits by herself and rarely smiles. Her expression strikes you as worried and fretful much of the time. You approach her to introduce yourself, and she hesitantly says hello. You invite her for coffee that week. As you chat, she begins to tell you her story. She is a single mom who has never been married. Her son is in special education in the third grade. He has a form of autism, and his symptoms are gradually worsening. She is struggling to make ends meet on her income as a grocery store clerk. She is able to have her son stay for an after-school daycare

program while she works, but she feels that it is not structured enough for him. He is getting bigger and more difficult to manage each year. He has violent outbursts and often does not sleep well at night. She constantly worries about his future — what does his future hold and who will take care of him if something happens to her? How will she have enough money for his care if she can no longer handle him by herself? She believes in God and says that she has trusted in Jesus as her Savior, but she wonders why He allows such a struggle in her and her son's lives? Why would He allow her son to suffer so much? Why would He not provide a husband for her someday to love her and her son and to ease her loneliness? Does God really care about her? She has far more questions than answers, and she is obviously reaching out for some help, encouragement, and hope. How would you offer hope to this woman in the context of this conversation? What might you do to help her as time goes on?

SUGGESTED RESOURCES for Worry, Fear, Anxiety and Stress

Overcoming Fear, Worry, and Anxiety: Becoming a Women of Faith and Confidence, by Elyse Fitzpatrick

Anxiety: Anatomy and Cure, by Bob Kellemen

Running Scared, by Ed Welch

Overcoming Anxiety: Relief for Worried People, by David Powlison

A Small Book for the Anxious Heart: Meditations on Fear, Worry, and Trust, by Ed Welch

A Still and Quiet Mind: Twelve Strategies for Changing Unwanted Thoughts, by Esther Smith

How to Help Your Anxious Teen: Discovering the Surprising Sources of Their Worries and Fears, by Jessica Thompson

Running Scared: Fear, Worry, and the God of Rest, by Ed Welch

Worry: Pursuing a Better Path to Peace, by David Powlison

Make sure to check the website for an updated, expanded list of resource suggestions!

LESSON FOUR KEY TAKEAWAYS:

Know when to get help from others when needs are complex

Consider this: “what is the most important thing about this person”

Take people at face value

Identity in Christ, not behavior

You can’t change a heart, but God can

Our lane is discipleship

Common grace applies to medical intervention

Emotions are God-given and important

We do not know everything

APPLYING 1 THESSALONIANS 4:18: Comfort

1 Thessalonians 4:18
"Therefore encourage one another with these words.
Note: some versions say "encourage" and others say "comfort".

NOTE: For your study of this week's One-Another Scripture, you can use any study method you choose. This kind of independent Bible study is stretching and good for us. Enjoy the process! Dig as deep as you wish. You can always come back to it in the future, too. In our meetings, as time allows, we will aim to discuss your study findings. If we don't have time, you will still benefit from your time in God's Word to focus on some of the one-another passages.

You will study this most accurately by reading in context in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, which is the broader passage that this verse is taken from. Remember that our focus for this study is One-Another ministry, so you will want to study that and related themes.

…To get you started, here are a few concepts that I (Ellen) discovered in my study. What can you add to them?

*In a nutshell, this whole passage backs up our One-Another phrase "apply the Gospel," because that is exactly what is happening here. It tells us that we have no reason to act as if we have no hope!

*There is no greater Truth to comfort and encourage others with than the hope of heaven.

*No matter how busy we are, how pressing our problems, how overwhelming our circumstances, a day is coming when Christ will return. That certain future gives us hope for today, and courage to endure the trials this side of heaven!

*There is no greater Truth to comfort and encourage others with than the hope of heaven. That certain future gives us hope for today, and courage to endure the trials this side of heaven!

*In vs. 13, Paul was clearing up some misunderstandings that the Thessalonians had about death and the coming of Christ. It was causing them a lot of anxiety. This is again why we need proper theology and doctrine! But Paul took the opportunity to set them straight, and talk with them about the need for them to stop grieving like everyone else around them.

*Paul shares hope by telling them that because Jesus died and rose again, so will we.
Whatever Jesus does, his people follow.
Wherever Jesus is, his people are there.

*This all applies to One-Another lifestyle, because we, too, have opportunities to share this future hope in order to encourage and comfort others.

What else did you learn?

BIBLICAL MENTORS: Paul and Timothy

2 Timothy 2:1-7

"You, therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. [2] What you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, commit to faithful menwho will be able to teach others also. Share in suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. [4] No one serving as a soldier gets entangled in the concerns of civilian life; he seeks to please the commanding officer. [5] Also, if anyone competes as an athlete, he is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules. [6] The hardworking farmer ought to be the first to get a share of the crops. [7] Consider what I say, for the Lord will give you understanding in everything.

NOTE: For your study of this lesson's biblical mentors, you can use any study method you choose. This kind of independent Bible study is stretching and good for us. Enjoy the process! Dig as deep as you wish. You can always come back to it in the future, too. In our meetings, as time allows, we will aim to discuss your study findings. If we don't have time, you will still benefit from your time in God's Word to focus on some examples of biblical mentors.

You will study this One-Another relationship more accurately by reading it throughout the books of 1 Timothy and 2 Timothy. In addition to the verses mentioned above, you can understand their relationship more by looking up the other places that their names are mentioned together.

…To get you started, here are a few concepts that I (Ellen) discovered in my study. What can you add to them?

*Verse 1 - Be strong, but it is strength found in Christ, not our own

*Verse 2 - Multiply ourselves! Paul taught Timothy, Timothy is to teach others, and they are to teach others, and so on. Mentoring should be done with the vision of multiplication.

*Verse 3 - we are called to suffer hardship together, not on our own.

*Verse 5 - we are to run the race (metaphor here) to win, which requires discipline, self-control, endurance, and toughness. All are required in the hard times of one-anothering!

*Verse 6 - another metaphor, of a farmer. This has to do with being hardworking, not lazy. Success is achieved through hard work and single-mindedness as we minister to others.

*Paul imparts wisdom to Timothy, who probably needed a ‘father figure’ to guide him as he took on the task of pastoring. We become a ‘mother figure’ to younger women and girls we are discipling and mentoring.

*They were passionate about the same causes, wanting to live a life worthy of their calling and to impact others. A mentor wants to extend his passions in to the life of another. A mentee wants to have his life filled with what the mentor can give.

What else did you learn from your study?

For further discussion, here are some options as time allows:

*If you are mentoring someone (or have mentored someone) and have anything about their situation that you need some help with, or input from others, and ideas for how to best care for them, let's discuss it (remember privacy and confidentiality, no names and avoid specifics that would identify that person.)

*Discuss some of the content from "Consider Your Counsel" if time allows.

*OR, what other questions do you have?

Use this space for any notes to refer to later, as needed.