

shepherding THE HEART FOR HEALTH

Discernment: Identifying Issues and Determining Severity

Shepherding the Heart for Health

- **Session 1** - *God's vision for Relationships within the Local Church*
- **Session 2** - *Understanding the Heart*
 - PRE-WORK: Excerpt from [Instruments in the Redeemer's Hands](#) by Paul Tripp
 - HOMEWORK: Identifying your Idols
- **Session 3** - *Understanding Health*
 - PRE-WORK: Newton's Stages of Spiritual Growth
- **Session 4** - *Understanding Healthy Heart Change*
 - PRE-WORK: Moralistic vs. Gospel Behavior Change
 - HOMEWORK: Fighting your Idols
- **Session 5** - *Walking with People in Struggle*
 - PRE-WORK: Chapter 7 - [Instruments in the Hands of the Redeemer](#) - "Building Relationships by Entering their World"
 - HOMEWORK: Four Liberating Truths for those who Pastor
- **Session 6** - *Discernment: Identifying Issues and Determining Severity*
 - PRE-WORK: Chapter 9 - [Instruments in the Hands of the Redeemer](#) - "The Goals of Speaking the Truth in Love"
 - HOMEWORK: Bringing the Gospel to bear in our actions and words

Why do we need discernment?

(1) No one wants to appear weak and in need of help

Q: *How does our culture encourage our tendency to maintain the appearance of strength?*

(2) No one wants to appear as the sinner that they truly are

STRATEGIES TO COVER UP OUR BROKENNESS - [\(talk through this with a specific sin\)](#)

Adapted from [You can Change](#) by Tim Chester, page 121

- We minimize the offense - "It's not that bad" "It was only a small thing"
- We compare ourselves with others - "At least I'm not like them" "Do you know what she did?"
- We highlight our goodness - "Yeah but I did this well"
- We call sin a misdemeanor, lapse, slip or fall
- We blame others - "I responded that way because of what they did to me"
- We have a whole vocabulary to avoid naming sin and evil as evil

(3) People, and the situations they find themselves in, are complex

3 Q's OF INTENTIONAL SHEPHERDING

1 Thessalonians 3:10 – *"Night and day we pray most earnestly that we may see you again and supply what is lacking in your faith."*

Where are we going? – *Have the end in mind*

Where are we now? – *Observe, learn, evaluate*

What is the next step? – *Layout a clear plan of action*

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Discernment: Identifying Issues and Determining Severity

WHERE ARE WE
GOING?

WHERE ARE WE
NOW?

WHAT IS THE NEXT
STEP?

Envisioning Spiritual Health Relationally

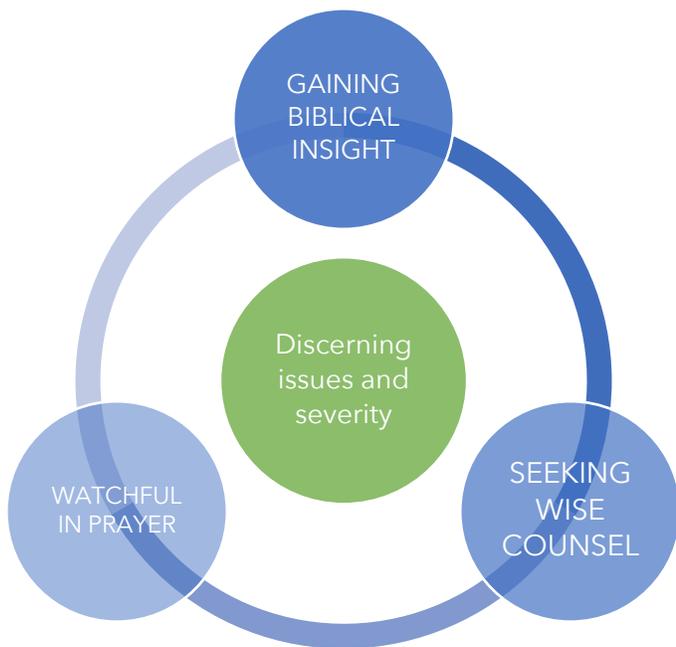
3 Rhythms of Healthy Heart Change

WHERE ARE WE
GOING?

WHERE ARE WE
NOW?

WHAT IS THE NEXT
STEP?

Discerning their needs and severity of issues



Gaining Biblical insight – Psalm 19:7-9

7 The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul; the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple; 8 the precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes; 9 the fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever; the rules of the LORD are true, and righteous altogether.

Seeking wise counsel – Proverbs 15:22

Without counsel plans fail, but with many advisers they succeed.

Watchful in prayer – Colossians 4:2

Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving.

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WHERE ARE WE GOING?

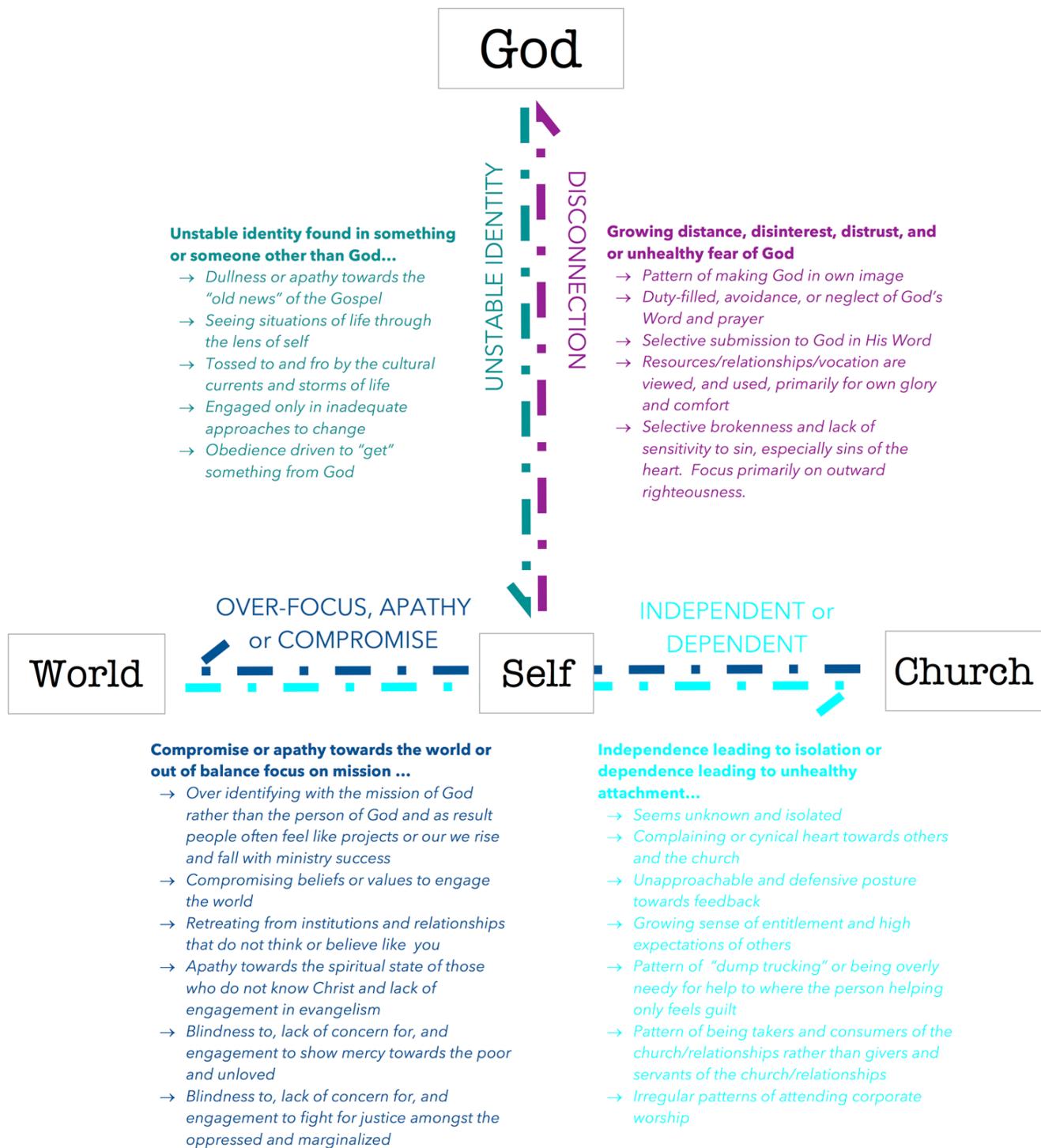
WHERE ARE WE NOW?

WHAT IS THE NEXT STEP?

Looking for patterns and a trajectory of spiritual unhealth

Envisioning Spiritual UN-Health Relationally

Warning Signs of Spiritual Unhealth



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WHERE ARE WE GOING?

WHERE ARE WE NOW?

WHAT IS THE NEXT STEP?

Exploring the situations of struggle

Guiding our Exploration

Proverbs 20:5 - *The purposes of a person's heart are deep waters, but one who has insight draws them out.*

Ask different types of questions - Adapted from Instruments in the Redeemer's Hands by Paul Tripp, page 178

WHAT? - uncovers general information

HOW? - uncovers the way something was done

WHY? - uncovers the purposes, desires, goals, or motivations

HOW OFTEN? WHERE? - uncovers themes and patterns

WHEN? - uncovers the order of events

Explore the emotions - *chase the anger, fear, guilt, shame, despair, and worry*

Emotions are dashboard lights that, when explored, can often reveal how a person is interpreting a situation and what they are treasuring.

Clarify what is said - *definitions and examples*

DEFINITIONS: *"What do you mean when you said that you were rude in the conflict?"*

EXAMPLES: *"What are some examples of what a huge fight looks like for you? Walk me through it..."*

Categories to explore the situation of struggle

Adapted from Instruments in the Redeemer's Hands by Paul Tripp, page 191-194

SITUATION

exploring the reality of the situation of struggle

What is/was going on?

⇒ Look for information from the past and present that help you understand the reality of what they are facing

RESPONSE

exploring the response of the person to the situation of struggle

What does the person do in response to what is going on?

⇒ Look for themes and patterns on how they are responding to the situation

BELIEFS

exploring the beliefs of the person in the situation of struggle (how they are interpreting reality)

What does the person think about what is going on?

⇒ Look for what lens they are seeing their situation through
 ⇒ Look for how they are making sense of the situation and what they are trusting in
 ⇒ Look for what they are believing about God, self, and others?

MOTIVES

exploring the motives of the person in the situation of struggle (what are they treasuring)

this along with beliefs drive a person's response

What does the person want out of what is going on?

⇒ Look for what they desire and want
 ⇒ Look for what they are hoping in
 ⇒ Look for what they are looking to as their medicine and anchor in the situation of struggle

Evidences of an unhealthy view of God, self, and others

The reality of *confessional* VS *functional* theology

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WHERE ARE WE GOING?

WHERE ARE WE NOW?

WHAT IS THE NEXT STEP?

Discerning the seriousness of situations and issues

Threat Level: Normal, concerning, serious, crisis or long-term

NORMAL: Issues that are common and in a relatively normal range of struggle with potential for damage is limited.

CONCERNING: Issues for which the potential for damage (spiritual, emotional, relational, financial) that it may cause to themselves, others or the church is elevated if there is not movement towards health in a timely manner.

SERIOUS: Issues for which the potential damage (spiritual, emotional, relational, financial) that it may cause to themselves, others or the church is very high if there is not movement towards health in a timely manner.

CRISIS OR LONGTERM: *Crisis* mental health, relational strife, and spiritual issues are those that put the person or someone else in physical danger. *Long-term* mental health, relational strife, and spiritual issues are those that will not necessarily see a trajectory of health in 3-4 meetings or their complexity necessitates a greater skill.

Potential Danger: Hindering engagement of relationships and/or life responsibilities. The issue threaten...

→ **SPIRITUAL TRAJECTORY** – debilitating to their trust in and treasuring of God

→ **EMOTIONAL STATE** – debilitating to their emotional stability

→ **RELATIONAL DYNAMICS** – debilitating to important relationships in their life

→ **CHURCH PURITY** – debilitating to the peace and purity of the church

EXAMPLE:

ANXIETY

Normal

-Triggered by sickness of a family member and an unstable stock market
-Flairs up weekly
-Subsides as they turn into it through prayer and meditating on promises of God's care as their Father

Concerning

-Been carrying on for several months with bouts of it that do not subside for several days and weeks
-They have been very on edge in their marriage and with their children
-They are wanting to avoid God's Word and been more doubtful of God's care
-Their financial giving is affected

Serious

-Been carrying on for several months with bouts of it that do not subside for several days and weeks
-They have begun to question whether God is real
-They have been seeking ways to escape hardship through alcohol
-They have had to leave work on multiple occasions because of an unstable emotional state

Crisis OR Long-term

-Been carrying on for several months with bouts of it that do not subside for several days and weeks
-They have considered taking their own life
-They are in constant fights in their marriage
-They have constantly run to alcohol
-There may be a connection with chemical imbalances and past trauma

EXAMPLE:

MARRIAGE CONFLICT

Normal

-Triggered by a tight few months of finances and stress at work
-Arguments arise weekly over various issues that are rooted in finances and job stress
-Both sides consistently confess, repent, and are restored

Concerning

-Been carrying on for several months with conflict that goes several days without restoration
-They seem on the edge of bitterness and resentment setting in
-They are struggling to see their own faults and pointing more and more at the other person

Serious

-Been carrying on for several months with conflict that goes several days to a week without restoration
-Entrenched in bitterness and resentment
-They see the majority of the spouses actions through this lens
-Kids are noticeably affected
-One spouse is spending significantly more time at work and was found reconnecting on social media with past flings

Crisis OR Long-term

-Been carrying on for several months with conflict that goes several days to a week without restoration
-Threats of divorce and strong suspicion of adultery
-Verbal and spiritual abuse are present

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WHAT IS THE
NEXT STEP?

Discerning how God is calling me to lead

One-time or ongoing plan

GENTLE CARE

1 Thessalonians 2:5-8 - **5** For we never came with flattering speech, as you know, nor with a pretext for greed— God is witness— **6** nor did we seek glory from men, either from you or from others, even though as apostles of Christ we might have asserted our authority. **7** But we proved to be **gentle among you, as a nursing mother tenderly cares for her own children.** **8** Having so fond an affection for you, we were well-pleased to **impart to you not only the gospel of God but also our own lives**, because you had become very dear to us.

COMPASSIONATE EXHORTATION

1 Thessalonians 2:11-12 - **11** just as you know how we were **exhorting and encouraging and imploring each one of you as a father would his own children,** **12** so that you would walk in a manner worthy of the God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.

- ⇒ How can I **validate** what they are thinking, feeling, or experiencing?
- ⇒ How can I **celebrate** evidences of God's faithfulness, work, and grace?
- ⇒ What can I **help them** see, understand, or do? How can I **help them** walk in repentance?
- ⇒ How can I **come alongside** them in compassion to care for them and bear this burden with them?

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

Be a **LEARNER**

Be **PATIENT** with the journey

REST in the Spirit

"Personal ministry is not about always knowing what to say. It is not about fixing everything in sight that is broken. Personal ministry is about connecting people with Christ so that they are able to think as he would have them think, desire what he says is best, and do what he calls them to do even if it their circumstances never get 'fixed.' It involves exposing hurt, lost and confused people to God's glory, so that they give up their pursuit of their own glory and live for His. It is about so thoroughly embedding people's personal stories in the larger story of redemption that they approach every situation and relationship with a 'God's Story' mentality. We need to be filled with awe at what the Lord has called us to participate in!" - **Paul Tripp, Instruments in the Redeemer's Hands, page 184**