



DISENTANGLED



Guide for Discussion

Chapter 1: An Inner World

- On a scale of one to ten, how aware are you of having an inner world?
- How would you describe your inner world? Is it chatty, calm, anxious, chaotic, or something else? What kind of temperament do you think you have—are you a very up-and-down person or are you more even?
- What is a biblical self-image? List at least three important truths about how we should see ourselves, with Scripture verses to back them up if you can. Try reading Romans 8:1-17 to help you.
- What happens to us when we get this view of ourselves wrong? Can you think of some specific examples?
- What change do you long for in your life? Is it to do with how you behave or how you think and feel? Maybe you can see there's a connection between both.
- How did you respond to the idea of parenting your inner self? Do you feel you can do this? What help might you need?

Chapter 2: Humanity's Sweet Spot

RECAP: What made sense to you most about chapter 1? What have you noticed about yourself since reading and discussing that chapter?

- “Looking *up* to God and *out* to others: that's our designed sweet spot.” Do you agree? What does it feel like when we are in this sweet spot?

Think about the image of an inner courtroom. We either listen to a defence barrister telling us that we're right, better than others, and worthy of our salvation, or we listen to a prosecution barrister reminding us of our failures and telling us that we should be ashamed and we can't be loved.

- What is wrong with each of those inner lawyers?
- What situations get you out of the sweet spot and listening to the defence barrister? What situations get you listening to the prosecution barrister?
- When this happens, how does it affect your behaviour? Think about how you feel, what you say, and what you do or don't do.
- What does it mean that Jesus is the perfect covering for our sin and shame? How is he similar and different to the covering of fig leaves for Adam and Eve, and the covering of goat skin for Isaac?
- What truths do we need to believe in order to avoid slipping back into our inner courtroom? List two or three things you want to remember, and back them up with Scripture if you can.

Chapter 3: The Grace Race

RECAP: When have you looked up and out in this past week? When have you looked in and down?

- Can you sum up the concept of the “grace race” versus the “rat race” in two sentences?
- What qualifies us for the grace race?
- How should it feel to run the grace race? Look at Matthew 11:28-30 and Leviticus 26:13 to help you.
- We easily get drawn into shame (“I’m too messy”) or pride (“Doesn’t anything I do count?”). Both stop us from believing or receiving God’s grace. When are you most likely to feel those things?
- Which rat-race strategies feel most familiar to you—self-promoting ones or self-protecting ones? (Look at page 44 to help you.)
- Look at Galatians 5:1, 4, 7. How do these words make you feel? What help do you need from the Holy Spirit?

Chapter 4: Our Code of Conduct

RECAP: How have you seen God’s grace to you in the past week? Has it helped you to visualise yourself as part of a grace race, not a rat race?

- Why is it helpful for people to identify their values or devise a code of conduct for their lives?
- What are God’s values? Write down as many as you can think of, backing them up from Scripture if you can.
- Choose one of the values from your list. What would be an AWAY move and what would be a TOWARDS move for this value?
- What difficult thoughts and feelings cause you to make AWAY moves? What makes it easier for you to make TOWARDS moves?
- Why is it sometimes hard to tell whether someone is making a TOWARDS move or an AWAY move?
- Complete the exercises at the end of the chapter, if you haven’t already. Talk together about your thoughts and feelings about all of this. Be honest!

Chapter 5: Paying Attention

RECAP: What have you noticed about your thoughts, feelings and behaviour since reading and discussing the last chapter?

- Can you relate to the idea of getting hooked or entangled by a difficult thought or feeling? Can you think of a recent example of when that has happened?
- Can you think of something you do on autopilot and something you do with full focus?

- Think of a recent example of something you did on autopilot when you should have been paying attention (or, when you were in thinking gear when you should have been in sensing gear). What were the consequences?
- There is a connection between being on autopilot and doing the wrong thing. Likewise, there's a connection between "coming to our senses" in a literal sense (paying better attention to the world around us) and doing what's right. Can you explain why paying attention better will help us to live better?
- Did you try out any of the exercises to change gear (page 72)? How did they go? Do you have other ideas about how to pull yourself out of autopilot?
- Did you have a go at a STOMP? When can you imagine this being useful in your life? Are you willing to practice it?

Chapter 6: Subconscious Saboteurs

RECAP: Have you practised STOMPs or the other exercises from the last chapter? What difference has it made?

- Which of the home group characters did you most identify with?
- Close your eyes and imagine a situation you would hate to be in—something that fills you with dread. Where in your body do you feel a reaction? What thoughts arise in your mind?
- Can you define the three fear responses—fight, flight and flop? Which of those words best fits the feelings you just described?
- What kind of situations make you most likely to experience this kind of response? What are you most likely to do when you experience this?
- How could understanding the nature of the fear response help you give more grace to those around you?
- How many of the ten Cs do you do on a regular basis? Which do you find most helpful already? Which do you want more of in your life?

Chapter 7: Feeling Saboteurs

RECAP: Did you include any of the ten Cs in your week? What were the costs and benefits?

- Why are emotions important? What's good about them? What do they communicate?
- What do you think about the idea of noticing our emotions, tolerating them and making TOWARDS moves in spite of them? How is this different to ignoring or suppressing what we feel? How is it different to being led by our feelings?
- How confident do you feel that you can do this? If you haven't yet, try the exercise on page 100 and then discuss how you found it.

- Can you give an example of what happens to us when we spend too much time running to things that make us feel good about ourselves, or too much time running away from things that make us feel bad about ourselves? What's the problem here?
- Which of the MAD behaviours listed on page 97 did you find most familiar?
- What is one emotion you would like to manage better? What truth about Jesus will help you with this?

Chapter 8: Thought Saboteurs

RECAP: How did you get on with noticing and naming your feelings in the past week? What else did you find helpful from chapter 7?

- In what sense does the mind act as a lens through which we see the world? Can you give some examples of how our beliefs influence what we do?
- What are some examples of faulty belief lenses? Can you see what lenses you tend to wear? Think about the mind stories you tend to come back to.
- Wearing those lenses, what will you believe when you start feeling the following feelings?
 - Guilty
 - Afraid
 - Jealous
 - Criticised
 - Affirmed
 - Anxious
- With a biblical self-image, wearing biblical lenses, what will you believe when you start feeling the same feelings?
- What can we do practically to develop a “right mind” and to set our minds on things above? What do we need to avoid doing?
- Which of the tools on pages 116-120 most appeals to you and why? How and when might you use them in the upcoming week?

Chapter 9: Racing with Others

RECAP: Did you practise any of the tools from chapter 8? What was that like? What did you notice about your mind and your beliefs?

- How do you feel about the biblical metaphor of church as a family or a body? Has your experience of your body or your family given you false lenses about the church that you need to acknowledge?
- Talk together about your church “glimmer moments”. Can you thank God for these and for

your church family, however flawed it is?

- How do you think our history with church—things that have happened to us and things we have done—can affect the way we interact with others in church now? Perhaps you can give an example from your own life.
- What does it mean to be a “There you are” person? Who do you know who is like this? What would it take for you to become like that?
- What thoughts, feelings and desires get in the way of you showing up at church or interacting with fellow believers in the way you’d like?
- How did you find using the four-part lens? (Try the exercises on page 134-137 now if you haven’t already.) What did you find difficult about it? What did you find helpful?
- Finish by praying together about your church family.

The Home Straight

- What insights have you gained from this book that you don’t want to lose?
- Which tools are you finding most useful to manage your difficult thoughts and feelings?
- How can you make sure to continue the progress you’ve started while reading this book?
- How can the hope of heaven help you better manage your inner life?