

## Tribe - Quarter 3 / Week 1 - The Essence of Identity

### Themes:

- For each follower of Jesus to know at the bottom of his heart that he is a son or daughter of God
- For this truth to override all other assertions, endure all circumstances including all manner of suffering, supersede all other comforts, and outlast all other pleasures

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- 9AM (15 mins) - Welcome; check-in; read Psalm 18; PRAY
- 9:15 (10 mins):
  - Overview of Tribe (using first page of syllabus)
  - Overview of Quarter 3
- Introduction of “identity” topic
  - Being a follower of Jesus requires a counter-worldly sense of oneself; this is even more true if a person is engaged in public ministry or ministry leadership.
  - Satan is a roaring lion, seeking to devour God’s ministers
  - In ministry, you *may* will be attacked, betrayed, rejected, misunderstood, persecuted, accused, questioned, flattered, misjudged, bribed, etc.
  - Video clip (scene from Gethsemane):  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Rmv1PmL6q0>
  - Why study personal identity?
    - Understanding ourselves helps us to understand God, in Whose image we were made.
    - Maintaining a clear, conscious, and deeply held sense of our own identity will help us withstand these attacks.
    - Understanding our own selves will help us not to waste time in making decisions about what to focus on in ministry.
    - Understanding our own selves helps to protect us from the vices of comparison, jealousy, envy, rivalry, conceit, pride, discontent, etc.
- Wim testimony
  - My whole life I have been asking the question “who am I?”
  - Identity is shaped by family and culture; I had strong family but not consistent culture around me.
  - Influence of my mother; influence of my father
  - Identity / existential crisis about 7 years ago - forced the question “who am I?”; I began to consciously look beyond my achievements. If I am not what I do, who then am I?
  - Essence vs. expression
  - Being, knowing, doing
  - I want to know who I am, I want to be all that I was designed to be, and I want to do all that I was designed to do.
  - Embracing essence enables expression

- Bible
  - **Deuteronomy 7:6-8 (loved for the sake of love)**
  - Ezekiel 16:1-14 (fathered by God)
  - **Isaiah 62:2-5 (delighted in by God)**
  - Jeremiah 29:10-14 (planned and provided for by God)
  - **Matthew 3:16-17 (God the Father is pleased in His Son)**
  - Romans 8:9-30; Galatians 3:23-4:7 (adopted as sons and daughters of God and siblings of Jesus with all the rights and privileges of children of God)
  - Ephesians 2:1-10 (made alive in Christ and with Christ for good works)
- Followers of Jesus are....
  - Unconditionally loved by God
  - Adopted and fathered by God
  - Valued by and important to God
  - Planned for and provided for by God
  - Spoken over and named by God
  - Chosen by God
  - Known, heard, and seen by God
  - Delighted in by God
- The role of submission and death in embracing essence:
  - **John 12:23-26**
  - Galatians 2:20
  - **Colossians 3:1-4**
  - Themes:
    - Release
    - Surrender
    - Submission
    - Death
    - Now what?
- Takeaway questions:
  - As you look back on your life up to right now, what has been / is at the core or essence of how you think of yourself?
  - What barriers exist in your heart and what lies have you believed about yourself that are preventing you from receiving the truths above about the essence of your identity?
  - What things is God prompting you to release, surrender, submit to, or die to in your life in order to enable you to fully embrace your essence as a son or daughter of God?
- 11:50 Homework summary / close in prayer (10 mins)
  - Read the unbolded passages above and reflect on how they apply to you
  - Begin planning for your Q3 reflection writing assignment (refer to the syllabus, Q3 page, for the Q3 writing assignment)
  - Reflect on the takeaway questions above
  - Optional: Read Parts I and II in *Who Am I?*
  - Optional: Think about which optional book to read for Q3

## Tribe - Quarter 3 / Week 2 - Ambassador, Sojourner, and Warrior Identities

### Themes:

- For each follower of Jesus to learn to recognize and understand the cultural assault on the Christian identities of ambassador, sojourner, and warrior
- For these identities to become rooted and established in the consciousness of followers of Jesus so that they motivate daily decisions

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- 9AM (15 mins) - Welcome; check-in; PRAY
- 9:15 (10 mins):
  - Review of last week; questions and feedback from last week
  - Passive identity: child of God; active identity: ambassador, sojourner, warrior, etc.
- Ambassador:
  - True ambassador identity
    - *All followers of Jesus in the world are called as representatives of Jesus to look for opportunities to share the message of hope that Jesus offers through our actions and our words.*
  - Bible passages
    - **2 Corinthians 5:17-20**
    - Ephesians 6:18-20
    - 2 Timothy 2:2
    - **Matthew 28:18-20**
    - Luke 24:45-48
    - **Acts 1:8**
  - Cultural and other barriers to this identity
    - Overemphasis on personal comfort; underemphasis on relationships
    - Low personal intimacy with God
    - Cultural rejection of absolute truth
    - Fear of rejection
    - Perception of being judgmental or condescending
    - Awareness of need
    - Busyness
    - Other?
- Sojourner:
  - True sojourner identity
    - *All followers of Jesus in the world are here on a temporary assignment that will be completed one day before we move to our true home with God in heaven. We are not at home in the world. We are at home in God. God is at home in us.*
  - Human nature, divine and corrupted
    - We all long for "home." We are hard-wired to seek home with people and places. This is a God-given desire.
    - Our corrupted nature seeks home apart from God. We seek the right house, the right neighborhood, the right apartment, the right location, the right roommate, the right city, the right furnishings, etc. (Wim's story of searching for these things) Again, the *desire* is right. The *object* of the desire is what we need to choose very carefully.
  - Bible passages
    - **I Peter 2:9-12**
    - Philippians 3:17-21
    - Matthew 6:19-21
    - **John 15:1-11**
    - **Hebrews 11:13-16; 13:12-14**
    - Revelation 21:1-3
  - Cultural and other barriers to this identity
    - Belief that this world is all there is
    - Inadequate conception of heaven as infinitely glorious and wonderful
    - Corruption of our human nature
    - Limitations of human nature
    - Busyness
    - Other?

- Warrior:
  - True warrior identity
    - *All followers of Jesus are in the middle of a cosmic spiritual battle between the Kingdom of God and the kingdom of darkness. The battle for the Kingdom of God will be won. Our true enemies are sin (inside us) and Satan (outside us). Human beings are not our true enemies. Our joyful task as warriors is to engage wholeheartedly in the battle against sin and Satan.*
  - Wim's history:
    - Victim of circumstances and other people
    - Word came alive; realized my power through Christ
    - Realized that God's heart is not for me to fight others but sin (example of victory over anger, resentment, bitterness)
    - What is sin? What is Satan?
    - Importance of understanding Satan's mind and personality; Many passages in my book describing how Satan operates as deceiver, accuser, etc.
  - Bible passages
    - **Romans 7:13-25** (we are in a daily battle against sin; sin is a distortion of our good desires to know and follow God)
    - **Ephesians 6:10-18** (battle is not against flesh and blood)
    - **1 Peter 5:8-10** (all believers are under attack by Satan and can resist him)
  - Cultural and other barriers to this identity
    - Heavy emphasis on intolerance of people (that are not like us), which distracts from the focus on the true enemies
    - Belief that the material world is all there is
    - Within Christian circles: over-emphasis on emotional and physical well-being as means to achieve spiritual well-being. (These are the fruits of spiritual well-being but not the means of spiritual well-being.)
    - Busyness (victorious fighting requires time, mental / emotional energy, and a willingness to be interrupted at inconvenient moments)
    - Separation of physical and spiritual realities
    - Other?
  - How to fight victoriously:
    - Trust in Jesus as revealed in the Bible (treasuring Jesus)
    - Wait on and surrender to Jesus in prayer (praying to Jesus)
    - Use the weapons of Jesus in our battles (study Ephesians 6 list) (depending on Jesus)
- Takeaway questions:
  - What barriers exist in my heart and life to having my identity as an ambassador rooted and established in my consciousness so that it impacts my daily decisions?
  - What barriers exist in my heart and life to having my identity as a sojourner rooted and established in my consciousness so that it impacts my daily decisions?
  - What barriers exist in my heart and life to having my identity as a warrior rooted and established in my consciousness so that it impacts my daily decisions?
- 11:50 Homework summary / close in prayer (10 mins)
  - Begin planning for your Q3 reflection writing assignment (refer to the syllabus, Q3 page, for the Q3 writing assignment)
  - Think about which optional book to read for Q3
  - Reflect on the takeaway questions above

## Tribe - Quarter 3 / Week 3 - Identifying the Deposit in You

### Themes:

- For each follower of Jesus to know what God has equipped him or her specifically and uniquely to show of God's glory
- For this knowledge to be rooted in the consciousness of the follower of Jesus so that it guides decision-making and overrides shame, fear, guilt, and all other negative impulses

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- 9AM (15 mins) - Welcome; check-in; PRAY
- 9:15 (10 mins):
  - Review of last week; questions and feedback from last week
  - Reminders:
    - **Tribe classroom teaching method:** Sharing ideas clearly, inspired by Scripture and my experience.
    - **Accepting the ideas:** I do not expect you to accept my ideas for my sake. I expect you to accept them if you find them to be true from Scripture; from discussions in class, with your mentor, and others; and if you find them to be true from your experience.
    - **Testing the ideas:** Paul says to "test all things and hold fast to what is good" (1 Thessalonians 5:21). I expect you to challenge, reject (if necessary), refine (if necessary), replace (if necessary), and revere (if appropriate) the things we discuss in class together, trusting the witness of the Word and of the Spirit.
- 9:25 (to the end) Identifying the deposit in you:
  - God has designed something specific and unique to be expressed through you of His beauty. Discovering these things is part of obedience and deeper peace and joy.
  - Self-awareness and expression are not the *source* (essence) of joy, but they are a natural and necessary part of knowing and enjoying God. Identifying what He has placed in us is a matter of stewardship.
  - **Remember: Embracing essence enables expression**
  - Wim's story of moving away from EY career but knowing that God made me for something specific, unique, and great.
  - Bible passages:
    - **1 Timothy 6:20; 2 Timothy 1:14**
    - **Isaiah 64:8**
    - **Ephesians 2:10**
    - **1 Peter 4:8-11**
    - **Psalm 139:1-6;13-16**
  - Our desires and passions come from God. They help us understand God's design for us.
  - Self-awareness comes both from personal reflection and listening to words from others about how they see us. Because of our own blind spots and deceptive biases, we need the voices of others (affirmation, exhortation, etc.) in our lives.
  - Understanding *what God has given us to offer to / for others* enables confidence and unlocks our ability to help and love others, which is extremely powerful. (Keep in mind:

knowing yourself and your own gifts / strengths may not be a challenge for you, but it may be a significant challenge for others around you. Learning to identify and consciously recognize your own strengths and the strengths of others can be a life-changing skill that you can offer to others.)

- Read Paul's epistles through the lens of his identity formation (especially 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Philippians, Philemon, 1 and 2 Timothy, etc.); you'll see how deeply he thought about his own calling not just in terms of a job or vocation but in terms of his actual identity.
- Wim's journey (helpful to verbalize and write down these things; helpful for decision-making about how I should use my time):
  - Life statement, life passions, ministry field, and ministry role (see last page)
- Other reminders:
  - After identifying the deposit, the next step is to cultivate and express the deposit.
  - It is critically important to embrace earthly *weakness* and earthly *foolishness* in this process. As we said in lesson 1, this process of becoming who God made us to be requires submission and death.
    - 1 Corinthians 1:18-31
    - 2 Corinthians 12:5-10
- Takeaway questions:
  - What has God placed inside me that He wants me to offer to others?
    - How does God want me to express His beauty uniquely?
    - How does God want others to see Him in me?
  - What are my primary passions?
    - What do I love to do?
    - What do I find myself dreaming about?
    - What evokes emotion in me?
    - If money were not a barrier, how would I spend my time? Why?
  - What are the activities I enjoy most?
  - What two or three words best describe a role that I am well-suited for?
    - What role or work do I long for?
  - What are my healthy fears?
    - What are real dangers that I see earlier, more clearly, and more prominently than other people do and which I can help to steer other people safely away from?
  - What are my unhealthy fears?
    - What are the areas which I'm tempted to be anxious and stressed about? Why?
- 11:50 Homework summary / close in prayer (10 mins)
  - Read the chapter (it's short; only 5 pages) entitled "Truthfulness" in Bonhoeffer's *Cost of Discipleship* (I can send you the pdf)
  - Read Part I from *In the Name of Jesus*
  - Reflect on the takeaway questions above.
  - Begin writing your Q3 reflection writing assignment (refer to the syllabus, Q3 page, for the Q3 writing assignment)
  - Please pay Q3 Tribe fees (\$300) by March 1 if possible using the following link:  
<https://www.aplos.com/aws/give/CityChurchofWoodbine/tribe>

**Wim's life statement:**

To enjoy and be totally satisfied in God's heart and to strengthen others to enjoy and be totally satisfied in Him.

**Wim's passions:**

To promote the peace of God in relationships (clarity, unity, and agreement) (peacemaking)

To speak the truth with clarity at the right time (exhortation)

To call forth the gifts God has placed in each person (father's heart to know and steward his child and to help others to see themselves as God sees them) (affirmation)

To minister the love of God to a people who have not yet tasted it or who have forgotten the taste of it (engagement and renewal)

To help people to taste and see afresh the delights of God (creative writing and teaching)

To help God's people be holy, healthy, and happy (Kingdom shepherding)

**Wim's field:**

Dry followers of Jesus, particularly ministers, who have forgotten their first love; growing followers of Jesus who need to taste God's love through friendship and fellowship

**Wim's areas of focus:**

Encouraging other ministers

Training people for the work of ministry

Administration

Fostering local outreach

**Wim's role:**

Prophet-shepherd

## Tribe - Quarter 3 / Week 4 - Honesty, Trust, and Dependence

Themes:

- Speaking transparently with a goal of helping others; leading with trust; not waiting to trust until I feel “safe”; the difference between discretion and deceit
- Understanding and practicing my deep need for others; foundation virtue: humility

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- 9AM (15 mins) - Welcome; check-in; PRAY
- 9:15 (10 mins):
  - Review of last week; questions and feedback from last week
  - Note about the readings; meant to inspire thought and reflection; won't necessarily discuss in class unless you have questions or observations
- 9:25 (to the end)
  - The things we will discuss today may seem obvious, but in your leadership, your willingness and ability to offer these things to others will be deeply tested. Resolve NOW to commit yourselves to these character traits, and invite God to change and strengthen you in these things so that you can stand firm in them when you have moments of shaking in your leadership.
  - *(This discussion will be from the perspective of leaders and will assume a healthy and balanced power dynamic (i.e. leaders have at least an equal amount of power than their followers / peers, if not more). From the perspective of an oppressed person, walking in integrity often requires other virtues which are beyond the scope of this ministry leadership course.)*
  - Wim's history with honesty, trust (always wanting to be trusted and eager to be with trustworthy people), and dependence (dependence is the only real path to thriving)
  - **Honesty: Transparency, sincerity, earnestness, and trustworthiness**
    - We all have a longing for these character traits in others.
    - As leaders, we must offer these things in ourselves, whether or not it is offered first by others or reciprocated by others.
    - These things must be unconditional in us.
    - The real question for leaders is: “Am I trustworthy?”; the question is NOT “Do other people trust me?” Not all people will trust a trustworthy leader. God, rather than people, is only the Judge of the leader's trustworthiness.
    - Definitions (all are Wim's definitions):
      - **Transparency** is revealing your heart in a way which edifies others even to your own cost.
      - **Sincerity** is speaking and acting in a way which reveals your good intentions toward others.
      - **Earnestness** is depth of goodwill toward others and desire for the truth
      - **Honesty** is speaking / revealing the truth
      - **Trustworthiness** is guarding, protecting, and stewarding things of value which belong to others (including information and possessions)
    - Bible:
      - **1 Corinthians 4:1-7 (the trustworthiness of an apostle)**
      - **2 Corinthians 1:12-13 (the sincerity and simplicity of Paul)**
      - 2 Corinthians 2:14-17 (the sincerity and truthfulness of Paul's ministry)
      - 2 Corinthians 4:2-6 (speaking the truth plainly)
      - 2 Corinthians 6:3-11 (at personal cost, speaking with deep truthfulness in order to commend the truth of God)
      - **2 Corinthians 8:7-8 (earnestness is commended)**
      - Ephesians 4:11-16 (ministry leaders speak truth without deception in order to build the church)
      - Ephesians 6:5-9 (we must conduct ourselves with sincerity whether we are leaders or followers)
      - **1 Timothy 1:5-7 (Paul's teaching comes from a sincere heart)**



- Proverbs 27:9 (speak with earnestness)
- **Trust: Leading with trust**
  - We must work hard to establish trust with others, including seeking to offer (demonstrate) trust to others. We must demonstrate a sincere willingness to trust others.
  - We must use generosity, affirmation, looking for good intentions in others, and believing the best of others to demonstrate our desire to build trust with others
  - Bible: **1 Corinthians 13:4-7** (the sincere childlikeness of love; love believes the best of others) and 1 Peter 3:8-9 (affirmation and blessing)
  - **Discretion vs. deceit**
    - Discretion includes withholding information from others in order to protect others (to the possible short-term harm of yourself). (*Note that discretion involves other things too, such as speaking winsomely, prudently, carefully, clear-mindedly, gently, and in a timely way. For our purposes today, we will focus on selectively withholding information for the good of others.*)
    - Deceit is withholding information from others in order to protect yourself (to the possible harm of others).
    - Transparency does not preclude discretion.
    - Bible:
      - **Psalm 24:3-6** (only a person with a pure heart without deceit will stand in God's presence)
      - **Psalm 32:1-2** (no deceit is found in the blessed person)
      - 1 Peter 2:1, 22 (put away deceit; no deceit in Christ)
      - **Revelation 12:9** (Satan is the deceiver of the world)
      - Proverbs 1:4, 3:21, 8:12
- **Dependence: Understanding and practicing dependence**
  - One of the ways I have managed to survive and thrive in the world up to this point, by God's grace, is to recognize and accept my deep personal insecurities and inadequacies and to embrace dependence on others.
  - God made us for dependence. He did not make us for independence. We miss out severely on the grace of God if we seek to be independent in thought or action. This is a significant issue for Americans and also for leaders. People from other cultures do this far more naturally than Americans do. Leaders are wired with some powerful gifts *including* the ability to think and act with initiative (without the leading or prompting of others). Learning to use these gifts in ways which promote dependence within the group (including the dependence of the leader himself / herself) is critically important.
  - Bible: 1 Corinthians 12; **2 Corinthians 11:30, 12:9-10**
- **Humility**
  - There are some gifts and blessings God gives to all people, regardless of merit. He causes the sun to rise on the just and on the unjust.
  - There are other gifts (particularly wisdom and insight and the blessings that follow from those) which He only gives to the lowly.
  - Bible: **Psalm 25:9**; 1 Corinthians 1:26-31; **Matthew 11:25-30**; Philippians 2:1-11
- Takeaway questions:
  - Where is God asking me to go deeper in transparency, sincerity, earnestness, honesty, and trustworthiness?
  - Where is there deceit in me?
  - Where is God asking me to practice greater discretion?
  - What actions help me lead with trust?
  - How can I act and live with greater dependence?
  - Where do I need to become lower in my life?
- 11:50 Homework summary / close in prayer (10 mins)
  - Read Part II from *In the Name of Jesus*;
  - Read the first half of your selected optional Q3 book.
  - Reflect on the takeaway questions above.
  - Begin writing your Q3 reflection writing assignment (refer to the syllabus, Q3 page, for the Q3 writing assignment)

## Tribe - Quarter 3 / Week 5 - Overcoming Fear, Sin, and Shame

Themes:

- Removing the power of fear of abuse, betrayal, rejection, pain, embarrassment in decision-making; willingness to be taken advantage of or to appear foolish
- Understanding the negative power of besetting sin and how to achieve victory
- Understanding shame dynamics within yourself uniquely and in others in order to maximize courage and love in decision-making; foundation virtue: repentance

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- 9AM (15 mins) - Welcome; check-in; PRAY
- 9:15 (10 mins):
  - Review of last week; questions and feedback from last week
  - Note about the readings; meant to inspire thought and reflection; won't necessarily discuss in class unless you have questions or observations
- 9:25 (to the end)
  - Fear is one of the deepest and most powerful ways that the devil attacks people, particularly people he is threatened by: faithful and obedient disciples of Jesus.
  - Each person has unique areas of fear which are developed in a thousand ways: personality, culture of family of origin, culture beyond family of origin, personal experiences of pain and difficulty, personal experiences of love and blessing, etc.
  - Wim's story of fear and struggle with my weaknesses; learning not to be afraid of them. Not just me; women in Iran who have suffered are now leading the Christian disciple movement there.
  - **Wim's definition of fear:** Present concern about the future possibility of pain associated with future events.
    - *Note: Our discussion of fear will not assume moral neutrality, such as fear of being burned when touching the fire of a candle. Our discussion of fear will assume that fear is morally negative or harmful (except in the case of fearing God), which aligns with the Biblical commands to "fear not."*
  - Pain involves suffering of the soul which is manifested in the body but not always triggered in the body. Fear may not involve concern about physical pain.
  - One of the most powerful ways Satan attacks leaders (and everyone else) is through fear of the possibility of shame.
  - **Wim's definition of shame:** The negative feeling a person experiences when a personal defect is known or could be known by others.
  - The only good kind of fear is fear of the Lord; all other fear is deadly.
    - *Note: I prefer to think of "fear of the Lord" as "fear of turning away from God." This Godly fear can also be described as "respect, revere, worship, or tremble in the presence of..."*
  - Truths to use in combating fear:
    - Greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world.
    - For followers of Jesus, all pain is temporary (limited in duration) and finite (limited in measure).
    - For followers of Jesus, all future events will turn into blessing for us.
    - All authority over the world and over all dimensions of reality (spiritual, physical, etc.) has been retained by God.
    - All of the authority and power of the devil (and those under the devil's influence) is granted and controlled by God and is therefore temporary and finite.

- Bible (For understanding, worship, and prayer (only scratching the surface!)):
  - Old Testament:
    - **Isaiah 35:3-4; 41:8-20; 43:1-7**
    - Deuteronomy 3:22; 31:6-8
    - **Psalm 27:1-3**
    - **Psalm 56:3-4, 8-11**
    - Psalm 18
  - New Testament:
    - Matthew 10:1; 28:18
    - **John 10:17-18**
    - **John 14:27**
    - Matthew 10:26-33
    - Matthew 14:25-33
    - Luke 12:22-34
    - **1 John 4:4, 18-19**
    - **2 Corinthians 1:8-11**
    - 2 Corinthians 4:16-18–5:11
    - Psalm 91
    - **Psalm 112**
    - Proverbs 3:7, 19-26; 19:23
    - Daniel 9:20-23; 10:8-19
    - Romans 8:14-15, 28-39
    - 1 Corinthians 15:22-28
    - Ephesians 1:20-23
    - Colossians 2:9-10
    - 2 Timothy 1:6-7
    - **Hebrews 13:5-6**
    - Revelation 2:10
    - Revelation 13:5-15
    - Revelation 20:1-3
- Exhortation: **We should never make decisions out of ungodly (ungrounded) guilt or out of ungodly fear.**
- Helpful resource: Tim Keller’s sermon series on praying through our emotions, including “Praying our Fears,” “Praying our Tears,” “The Healing of Anger,” etc. These can be found on the following website: <https://podcast.gospelinlife.com>
- **Sin and Shame**
  - We’ve asserted that sin and Satan are our true, ultimate enemies.
  - **Sin** attacks us by *distorting our actual relationship with God* and *causing us to be cut off from the Vine* so that we cannot bear fruit and walk spiritually with clear-minded, Spirit-filled power.
  - **Satan** attacks us through *temptation to seduce us either to sin or to believe that we have sinned* (i.e. that we have reason to feel guilt and shame)
  - (Guilt = wrongdoing; shame = wrong being)
  - Godly vs. ungodly shame:
    - Earlier we defined “shame” as “the negative feeling a person experiences when a personal defect is known or could be known by others.”
    - While shame can originate through a physical, spiritual, mental, or emotional (etc.) event, *it always has a spiritual root.*
    - **Godly shame** occurs when we have actually sinned; it is the product of a *healthy conscience* and is a signal that we need to confess and repent in order to have our communion<sup>1</sup> with God restored.
    - **Ungodly shame** occurs when we believe negative lies about ourselves (i.e. that there are negative aspects about ourselves which in fact are untrue; that I am “bad” in certain areas, that I am not valuable, that I am not worth taking care of, etc.).
    - Can you think of examples of Godly vs. ungodly shame?
  - Confession and repentance; freedom and victory:
    - **Wim’s definition of confession:** An honest, specific, and conscious acknowledgement of personal wrongdoing (i.e. sin) to the aggrieved party (God or others) characterized by remorse and contrition
    - **Wim’s definition of repentance:** A heartfelt desire and will to turn away from sin and turn toward righteousness
    - Three-pronged approach to confession:

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<sup>1</sup> John Owen (born 1616; died 1683), an English Puritan and arguably the chief among them, wrote extensively about “union” with Christ (our actual “ontological” state of being united with Christ which is unbreakable and fixed in the spiritual realm) vs. “communion” with Christ (our real life experience of moving in and out of fellowship with Christ as a result of our ongoing battle with sin and our flesh). He also wrote an excellent book about overcoming sin entitled *The Mortification of Sin in Believers: Containing the Necessity, Nature, and Means of it; With a Resolution of Sundry Cases of Conscience Thereto Belonging*. He said “be killing sin or it will be killing you.”

- With specificity, acknowledge the sin
  - With understanding, acknowledge the damage caused by the sin
  - With sincerity, ask the aggrieved party for forgiveness
- Confession and repentance for believers do not change *how God sees us*; when He looks at us He no longer sees our sin because we have been justified in His sight. Rather, confession and repentance change *how we see God*; when we confess and repent, the cleansing of our consciences wipes away the mud from the windshields of our hearts, enabling us to see and hear God again in communion with Him.
- Cling to and declare to yourself (and to the devil) your justification!
- After confessing and repenting, disassociate yourself (your identity) from your sin.
- Remember that you were made for freedom, not captivity.
- Confession and repentance help us to maintain healthy consciences, which are powerful in helping us overcome sin and shame in our lives.
- Remember that victory over sin is possible because of the power of Christ in us, through Whom we can say no to sin and the devil.
- It is possible to overcome all known sin; we are NOT destined to continue giving in to sin.
- God in His mercy does not reveal all sin to us at once; we would be overwhelmed if He did. He reveals it to us progressively, giving us more and more grace to overcome it. For this reason, mature believers are the most aware of their sinfulness. Paul called Himself the “chief of sinners”; older people (who are wise) often talk about their sinfulness.
- Besetting sin:
  - **Wim’s definition of besetting sin:** A sin struggle or pattern which we are prone to due to a variety of reasons (personal nature / personality, personal history, generational curses, etc.).
  - Overcoming besetting sin:
    - Identify the circumstances in which the sin tends to manifest itself or in which you are especially vulnerable to temptation; identify warning feelings.
    - Identify applicable promises, warnings, and exhortations from the Bible.
    - Identify opposite virtues to strive and aim for.
    - Begin praying proactive and “attacking” prayers against the sin.
  - Example from Wim (read list / excerpt from my “Killing Sin” document)
- Bible:
  - **Psalm 32:1-5 (a healthy conscience at work; the process of confession)**
  - Psalm 51 (the fruit of confession and repentance)
  - **I John 1:9 (confessing specifically, particularly, confidently, historically)**
  - Psalm 103:8-13 (removal of our sin)
  - Isaiah 1:18 (cleansing)
  - Exodus 28:2, 40 (clothed with beauty and glory)
  - Hebrews 12:1-2 (despising ungodly shame)
  - Galatians 5:1 (we were made for freedom)
  - Romans 8:1-15 (life in the Spirit; freedom from slavery)
  - **I Corinthians 8:7-12 (weak vs. strong consciences)**
  - **II Corinthians 7:8-13 (Godly grief vs. ungodly grief)**
  - I Timothy 1:5 (good conscience)
  - I Timothy 4:1-2 (seared conscience)
  - Titus 1:15 (clean vs. defiled consciences)
  - Psalm 139:23-24 (ask God to reveal your sin to you so that you may overcome it)
  - Zechariah 3:1-5 (a picture of overcoming shame)
  - Revelation 19:7-8 (clothed with righteousness)
  - Isaiah 61:10 (clothed with the garments of salvation)
  - Other passages about clothing of righteousness: Job 29:14, Isaiah 59:17, Isaiah 11:5, Isaiah 64:6, Psalm 132:9, Revelation 3:4

- Takeaway questions:
  - What are you most afraid of?
  - Where does that fear come from?
  - Can you think of a time when that fear has influenced your decisions with a costly outcome for you and / or others?
  - What steps can you take to turn away from fear?
  - Case study: read Matthew 26:57-75 and compare / contrast the experiences and responses of Jesus and Peter when they were questioned in the court of the high priest. Reflect on how they dealt with their fear.
  - What are the areas in which you regularly feel shame?
  - Do you see how Godly shame vs. ungodly shame manifests in your life?
  - What are your besetting sins?
  - For each besetting sin:
    - What are the circumstances in which they tend to manifest themselves?
    - How do I feel right before / as they manifest themselves?
    - What are the promises of God useful for attacking each sin?
    - What is the opposite of each sin?
    - What are helpful tools I can use to cultivate the opposite of each sin?
- 11:50 Homework summary / close in prayer (10 mins)
  - Read Part III from *In the Name of Jesus*
  - Do a word search in the ESV (or another translation which is more literal) for verses with the word “conscience”
  - Read the second half of your selected optional Q3 book.
  - Reflect on the takeaway questions above.
  - Continue writing your Q3 reflection writing assignment (refer to the syllabus, Q3 page, for the Q3 writing assignment)

## Tribe - Quarter 3 / Week 6 - Discipline and Sabbath

Themes:

- Understanding the difference between rest and laziness
- Understanding the difference between discipline and ungodly striving
- Foundation virtue: steadfastness

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- 9AM (15 mins) - Welcome; check-in; read Psalm 90; PRAY
- 9:15 (10 mins):
  - Review of last week; questions and feedback from last week
  - Brief review of syllabus and upcoming events
- 9:25 (to the end)
  - **Discipline:**
    - I love how humans are always catching up to God in our learning; we are always discovering truths and thoughts which God has known and thought for billions of ages. When we accept the knowledge of God in our living, we experience the peace of God with greater intensity and duration.
    - I have heard many people quote research from neuroscientists about the neurological benefits of discipline, routine, habit, and ritual. Having experienced and observed those benefits in my own mind and life and in the lives of others, I am not surprised about what scientists are “discovering.”
    - **Wim’s definition of discipline:** *Discipline* is a level of tension and strain (mentally, physically, emotionally, etc.) that is sufficient to change the mind, heart, and choices (behavior).
      - Discipline strengthens the mind and body, enabling better stewardship of resources (time, energy, money), fuller obedience to God, and better management of relationships.
      - Discipline takes time to implement; habits take time to form. Don’t try too much at once!
    - Wim’s experience of discipline as an “anchoring” element in a life filled with transition and identity questions.
    - Pitfalls to avoid:
      - The good desire to avoid legalism can make us also avoid discipline, unwittingly
      - The good desire to be disciplined can make us overemphasize it to the point of not resting enough
    - Bible:
      - Proverbs 3:11-12
      - **Proverbs 5:21-23**
      - Proverbs 12:1
      - Proverbs 13:24
      - Proverbs 19:18
      - Proverbs 22:15
      - Proverbs 23:13
      - Proverbs 29:17
      - Proverbs 29:19
      - Jeremiah 46:28
      - I Corinthians 9:14-27
      - I Corinthians 11:28-32
      - Ephesians 6:4
      - **Titus 1:7-8**
      - **Hebrews 12:1-17**
      - Revelation 3:15-19

- **Sabbath:**
  - Finding the right balance of work, rest, expenditure, replenishment, healthy stress, and healing is something humans have searched for for a long time. Scientists love to study it; therapists and pastors talk about it too.
  - This is another area in which we are thinking God's thoughts after Him.
  - Rest is letting go of work and effort in the right way at the right time; laziness is resting when one should be working.
  - **Wim's definition of Sabbath:** *Sabbath* is the dedication of time, normally one day per week, to stop from regular work and other regular non-essential activity in order to experience renewal of one's relationship with God, others, and oneself.
  - **Why is it so important to God?** Sabbath is an exercise in patience and in faith that God will provide for our needs and help us finish the work we have started.
  - Wim's experience of learning to observe the Sabbath in my family with school, work, etc.
  - Pitfall to avoid: There is a great danger of legalism (focusing on external appearances and practices vs. the spiritual benefits of the Sabbath) in Sabbath-keeping, because it is a regular, "ritualistic" practice. We must guard our hearts against heartless observance of the Sabbath.
  - Bible:
    - **Genesis 2:1-3**
    - Exodus 20:8-11
    - Exodus 31:12-17
    - Leviticus 25:1-7
    - Numbers 15:32-36
    - **Isaiah 30:15**
    - Isaiah 56:2-7
    - **Isaiah 58:13-14**
    - Matthew 12:1-8
    - **Mark 3:1-6**
    - Luke 13:10-17
    - John 5:16-17
    - John 7:19-24
    - Colossians 2:16-3:4
    - **Hebrews 4:1-13**
  - Discussion: How can we practice Sabbath in 21st century America?
- Takeaway questions:
  - Where in my life could I use greater discipline?
  - Where am I being lazy in my life (and what does that say about what is in my heart)?
  - Where am I striving too much in my life (and what does that say about what is in my heart)?
  - How can I practice the Sabbath in my life with greater faithfulness?
- 11:50 Homework summary / close in prayer (10 mins)
  - Reflect on the takeaway questions above.
  - Submit all writing assignments for Q3
  - Pay Q3 fees (if you haven't already)