

Alignment (Week 1)

Small Group Lesson

Ever hit a pothole with the car and noticed from that moment on something was just not right? The steering pulls to the left, the right. Sometimes the effects of an impact are not seen right away. After a few weeks you begin to notice that the front tires are wearing uneven and there is now a vibration that was not there before. You probably knocked the front wheels out of alignment. Roads are full of potholes. They come out of nowhere and before you know it, BAM, things are not the same.

To bring a front wheels back into alignment a mechanic must repair the damaged parts if necessary and adjust the wheels back to the manufacturers standards. Only when that has been done will things return to normal. Spiritually speaking, life is full of potholes as well. Health struggles, layoffs, relationship issues, and the list goes on. As men of God we understand that we too can get out of alignment. Impacts from life's potholes have affected our spiritual walk. We find ourselves being pulled one way or the other and like the Apostle Paul thinking; "I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate" (Romans 7:15 ESV)

Like a mechanic has tools that can determine when a car is in perfect alignment, we have the Word of God that we use to help us stay in alignment with His perfect standard (2 Timothy 3:16). In this semester we will walk through a study of the book of Romans beginning with the basics, making sure our foundation is sure and in alignment with our Creator's standards.

NOTE: This teaching is direct and right to the point. If you are easily offended you might want to sit this one out. But if you are serious about living a godly life, let's roll!

Read Romans 1:16 - 17

I. "The Gospel...is the power of God unto salvation..."

Are you living "saved?"

Ask any man this question and you may receive a number of different answers. One man asked started a 15 minute discourse about all of the sins he had committed and nothing about the essence of what Christ did for him. Christ gets no glory out of the sinful things we have done. A man needs to understand that he is lost in his sin. Salvation is not about the bad things we have done but about what Jesus did for us. The name, "Jesus" means "God saves." Salvation is understanding that I am lost if I remain in my sin and need

the salvation that comes from Christ. When I ask Jesus to save me I am rescued, delivered, healed, and restored. I am “saved”.

Alignment question: Are you living in the righteousness of God or still allowing areas of your life to be bound by sin? No hiding. If so what area seems to be the easiest for you to drift away from living a righteous life?

II. “Living Unrighteous” (v. 18)

Unrighteous living suppresses (or puts it’s hand over the mouth of) the truth 18-19. Our God has revealed His Divine Nature and Person to all men through creation and conscience. He has taught men to fear Him, but they have rejected that light. Men know better but still choose to do what is wrong. The conscience will tell us what we have done wrong but we don’t listen. Verse 20-21 Now we know that creation declares the presence of God. People all over the world can see that there is a creator. All God needs is for men to give Him glory and thanks but because man has refused to worship God but instead worshipped himself, his foolish heart has become darkened. Ungodliness” (no respect for God) and “unrighteousness” (acts of sin) trigger the “wrath of God” (v. 18).

Alignment Questions: In what ways do we see the worship of self played out around us? What are some ways that men can keep themselves in alignment when it comes to the way we see themselves?

III. “Immorality” (v. 24)

Men become confused when they suppress the truth. It is a short step from “idolatry” to “immorality.” When man becomes his own “god,” he does whatever he imagines to do. Men will give up the natural use of the body for that which is unnatural. It does not matter what culture may say, this is never God’s plan for men! The scripture says clearly right here that these are immoral actions of an immoral society. We don’t hate these people but pray that God would set them free. From the darkened, reprobate mind of man comes 24 specific sins that are common to all men (v.24-32).

Alignment Question: When you read through the list of 24 sins, how many of them and others mentioned do we see promoted and displayed through media? What should be our response as men of God when confronted by such immorality?

App. Point: If you have not read Life 01, now would be a great time to learn more about who Jesus is and what He did for you. So many men have been exposed and even participated in immoral practices and need a time of cleansing. The Freedom Encounter is a great place to receive healing and deliverance from your past. Ask your B-Group Leader about attending at the end of this semester. Do you have another man that you are accountable to? If not, would you like one or is that a future step for you?

Leader: Take a few minutes and lead your group in a fresh commital to live a “saved life”. Challenge them to have an accountability partner that they can trust to encourage them through the potholes of this life.