

## Weekly Study

### Holiness in a Half-Hearted World | Doug Wekenman | August 7, 2022

*\*A note to leaders: there have been two additional questions added to the “grow” and “move” portions of the Weekly entitled ‘Dive Deeper’. This is designed for you to help guide your group into deeper relationship with Jesus and each other, and take an additional step for owning their relationship with Jesus throughout their week.*

## START

Go around and check in with your group with the following questions:

- What were the best and worst parts of the last week?
- What is the most impactful or challenging thing you learned during Sunday’s sermon?
- What did that thing teach you about God? About yourself?

## SHARE

On Sunday we kicked off a new series called “Right Side Up”. Doug talked to us about how often we call the kingdom of God the “upside down kingdom”, but this actually isn’t true: Jesus’ kingdom is the right side up way of living and the world is upside down. Once upon a time it was just God and his kingdom (Gen. 1:1)... then humans were created... and then they chose their own way and made a decision to redefine what is right and wrong. They chose their own way instead of God’s way and consequently introduced sin into the world, which turned everything upside down. The death and decay and brokenness that we experience are not part of the design of a world that’s right side up; they are symptoms of the separation between a fallen people and a holy God. Jesus was the one who came and bridged the gap, turning everything right side up for us.

## GROW

### **Read Isaiah 59:2.**

We all have an angst in our souls pointing to the truth that we were made for something more than what the world has to offer. Have you ever noticed that no matter how much you try, you can never solve the problem of unfulfillment? Why is it that even the ones who have it all would tell you that there is a sense of hollowness in their gut at the end of the day? The reason for this is because we have a separation problem that has been created by our sin, and God himself is the only one who can provide the completion, purpose and security human beings deeply crave.

Sin is the thing that created the separation problem, but over time, humans stepped in and created religious games that have pushed people to feel as though they must earn and work their way to heaven. It's an impossible position to be put in, because it creates the question, *"How can you actually be positive that you are going to heaven?"* The answer is not because you are a good person or did enough good things, because compared to the righteousness and perfection of a holy God, our good works can't begin to make a dent in getting closer to bridging the chasm between us.

Jesus came to be what we aren't and do what we could never do, which means the pressure is off of us to earn our way into right standing with God. The tree in the garden flipped the world upside down, but a Savior on a tree is the one who turned things right side up.

- The gospel message is scandalous. What has been your understanding of it up until now?
- What is the thing that you are currently chasing that you keep hoping will provide the fulfillment you're looking for? What thoughts and emotions come to mind when you think about the truth that Jesus is the only thing that will fully satisfy those longings?
- *Dive Deeper:* Provide an invitation for the people in your group to respond to the grace of Jesus and make a decision to put their faith in Him if they have not already. You can also wait until the end of the night to explore this portion of the questions. There's no need to get formal with it — simply let your group know that if this is decision they would like to make, they're making the best decision of their life, and that they can come talk with you or anyone on staff for next steps!

## M O V E

### **Read Hebrews 10:14.**

There is a person that you are in Christ Jesus, which is sealed by the gift of salvation. There is also the process of sanctification, which is the ongoing process of becoming more and more like that person over the course of the rest of your life. Sanctification is to be right side up in an upside down world.

If we are already made perfect because of the sacrifice that Jesus made for us, what is the point of pursuing holiness? It's not for Him. He has a million angels worshipping him right now, even as you read this sentence. It is not a requirement for us, but we are invited to partake and receive more of the joy and abundant life he always intended for us. If you only pursue short-term happiness, it will lead to pain and compromise. The pursuit of holiness, which we so often think is boring, is the thing that we are actually craving and will give us the peace and joy and

freedom that we are looking for.

- Think about the words “holiness”, “repentance”, “obedience”, “purity” ... do you have religious baggage associated with those words? Explain.
- Holiness and happiness are intimately connected. How true is that statement to you? Explain.
- *Dive Deeper:* Jump down to the “pray” section and split up into groups of no more than three to pray together.

## P R A Y

Spend some time sharing prayer requests. If you are in a co-ed group, consider breaking up into separate groups to share more freely.

- Ask the Holy Spirit to increase your awareness of the holiness of God this week.
- Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal places in your heart that you are still hoping will provide the satisfaction and fulfillment you’re looking for. When he does, find someone from your group and commit together to surrender those things to Him and allow Him to give you more of His plans and purposes for your life.