

WEEK 4: Ownership

FACILITATOR'S NOTE:

- ✓ Start your group discussion with the "Check-in" question to help your members reflect back on their week and follow up on last week's application challenge.
 - ✓ Review the "Big Idea" to help you gain clarity around the heart of this week's message and focus your group's discussion towards a clear direction.
 - ✓ Reflect on this week's scripture passages and guide your group through the "Discuss" questions to initiate meaningful dialogue around key concepts or insights from this week's message.
 - ✓ Move your group discussion to a deeper level by leading them through questions in "Apply". Use discernment to customize these application questions to meet the needs & dynamics of your group.
- NOTE:** You do not have to cover all the questions provided in "Discuss" and "Apply".
- ✓ Connect with God together as a group through this week's "prayer practice", which can be in the form of a prayer exercise or some guidance on what to pray for in relation to the message or application.

CHECK-IN	In this past week did your identity as a child of God help you in your fears, weaknesses and daily challenges? Explain.
BIG IDEA	<p>Living as a victim is easy. Living free means I take personal responsibility for both the good and bad parts of my life. It may not be my fault, but it is my responsibility. One of the most powerful things we can do in our lives is to take personal responsibility for today. As followers of Christ, we can face our past and our future with no regrets. Yet, the enemy wants us to hide and cover up our brokenness, blame those around us for our circumstances, and he especially wants us to be angry at God and blame him for everything.</p> <p>God wants us to take ownership, which means that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. My past refines me, but it does not define me.2. I am more committed to being free than placing blame.3. I stop giving up on myself and start believing in God.
DISCUSS	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. If your life was a car, how do you treat it? Owning, renting, borrowing, leasing, stealing? How would you describe your view of life in these terms?2. Read Genesis 3:1-13. Pastor Brian elaborates on this passage and observes how Adam and Eve "hid" from God. How do people tend to deflect ownership? How do you personally deflect ownership?3. Paul writes in 2 Corinthians 12:9, "My grace is all you need. My power works best in weakness." What blocks you from believing in your core that you are loved unconditionally, that you are forever loved by God in Heaven who made you? How could the cross and God's love give you the courage to take ownership of your life?

APPLY

Circle the letters that apply to you, then discuss with the group.

1. What are the most common ways that you hurt others?
 - A) I demand that my needs be met by others.
 - B) I use blame and shame to emotionally hurt others.
 - C) I label others with my negative traits.
 - D) I make decisions without regard to the consequences.
 - E) I pretend to agree with others to get what I want.
 - F) I express negativity in indirect and passive ways.
 - G) I use indirect and evasive communication to avoid conflict.
 - H) I withhold expressions of appreciation.

2. What are the most common ways that you hurt yourself?
 - A) I minimize or deny how I truly feel.
 - B) I mask my pain in anger, humor, or isolation.
 - C) I am embarrassed to receive recognition, praise, or gifts.
 - D) I accept sexual attention when I really want love.
 - E) I am afraid to express my opinions when they differ from those of others.
 - F) I have trouble setting healthy priorities.
 - G) I am extremely loyal, remaining in harmful situations too long.
 - H) I avoid emotional, physical, or sexual intimacy to keep my distance.
 - I) I believe displays of emotion are a sign of weakness.

3. Pastor Brian shared that, "My past refines me but does not define me. Taking ownership means it may not be my fault, but I take responsibility." What does this statement mean to you?
4. Is there anyone you need to reconcile with this week to take better ownership of your life? Maybe an apology?
5. Are there negative influences in your life that are holding you back from growth? How could these be removed? Explain.
6. Have you ever shirked responsibility and played the blame game? What was the situation, and what would have happened if you owned it right from the start?

PRAYER PRACTICE

Separate into groups of two or three. Share some of the obstacles to ownership that might be hindering your walk with God. Pray for your each other and promise to continue to pray for each other throughout the week.

