Session 4: Starting the Journey Together.

This week we're going to look at how we can keep living out the freedom that Jesus offers us. We will explore how we can ensure that sharing and breaking our cycles is not a one-time experience and is instead a first step into deeper relationships.

CONNECT

30% of your time
As a group:
Pray to begin this time together. Who wants to volunteer?
Warm-up question:
What is one thing your closest friends or family would say is a strength of yours?
Check-in questions:
What came up for you over the past week, either from our meeting together or from your Digging Deeper reading?
What is something that has stood out to you personally over the past four weeks?

LEARN

20% of your time
Watch the "Starting the Journey Together" video.

LIVE

50% of your time
Discuss: *What does this mean for me personally?*

Choose a few questions that jump out at you from the list below to process as a group.
What stood out to you in the video?

What has been your experience with accountability, either good or bad? How are permission and protection different from accountability?
What makes it difficult to walk with each other well in our crazy-making cycles?
How do you personally receive love and protection? What does that look like and not look like for you? (Hint: this is your opportunity to say "Please don't . . . " or "I feel cared about when people . . . ")
Is there anyone that currently has permission to speak into your life? Have you specifically told them this?
"Submission" is a hard word for many of us. What makes someone feel safe to submit to?

Exercise:
Spend five minutes individually processing the questions below.

What is something I would like to change in my life?
Who could I give permission to help me with this?
When and how will I reach out to this person?
What will it look like to submit to their strengths if they agree to walk with me in this struggle or area of improvement?
If I submit to their strengths and they help protect me from my weaknesses, what do I hope would be the outcome months from now?

Apply: *What faith step is God inviting me to take?*

It's easy to either never talk about these cycles again or become the behavior police for each other. Neither is helpful or loving. How can you as a group walk alongside each other in your crazy-making cycles? Talk about it practically and tangibly. Here are some ideas to get you started:

Pair up and commit to pray for your partner's joy, freedom, and awareness of God's love over the next month.
Split into smaller groups once a month to check in on your crazy-making cycles.
Commit to reaching out to two people in the group when you feel like you're in the middle of a cycle, giving them permission to protect you.
Commit to getting coffee or dinner with one or two different people from your group per month. Spend time asking about their heart, where they're struggling to believe their identity, and how you can encourage them.
Plan a group weekend getaway in the next three months to rest and rejuvenate. Talk about who you truly are in Christ and areas you want to grow in trusting him.
Does anything else come to mind? Be creative, but practical. Try to make it an actionable step in order to help integrate your actions with your beliefs.

How we're going to live it out:

We've been focusing on applying what we've learned week to week thus far. Let's look a little farther ahead. What would you like to be different in your life in six months based on what you've been learning with this group?

TIP: Watch *The Heart of Man* movie as a group for a powerful depiction of the Father's love in the midst of these cycles. Then, consider using the six-week participant guide to process the film. You can find both at **heartofmanmovie.com**.

Pray to close out this time together.

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