

- right now under a high-powered microscope? If that's uncomfortable, why? If not, why not?
- Do you consider yourself to have primarily a reactive personality or a proactive personality? Which is more conducive to spiritual growth? Why?

WEEK 8: FEBRUARY 18-22

Proverbs 14:15; Genesis 3:8-10;
Mark 5:35-43; Joel 2:21-27;
1 Peter 1:13-21

A renewed mind doesn't just happen by accident. It has to be trained. Though discipline can sometimes seem "unspiritual," it's biblical (1 Timothy 4:7; Hebrews 5:14). We need to establish in our mind the framework for godliness and trust the Spirit to fill it.

- Why doesn't the Spirit just change our minds immediately? Why isn't behavioral change enough?
- How does fear affect our faith? In what way should we fear God? In what ways shouldn't we?
- What do we do to cultivate our fears? What can we do to starve them and cultivate faith instead?
- How does regret hinder our relationship with God? How can we get past our grief over past mistakes?
- How is the biblical concept of hope different than the way "hope" is used today? Which definition better describes your hope?

WEEK 9: FEBRUARY 25-28

Hebrews 12:14-15; Romans 13:8-10;
Psalm 18; 2 Corinthians 10:4-5

The natural mind wrestles with fear, anger, bitterness, and despair. The spiritual mind is able to love, trust, hope, and accept the power of God in place of its weakness. The more we can do to cultivate the thoughts of God's mind in ourselves, the closer we'll grow to Him.

- In what way is our bitterness well-founded? Why is it irrational to hang on to it?
- How is our love for God related to our love for other people? Is it possible to have one without the other? Why or why not?
- How can our weakness be helpful to us? Why are we so reluctant to accept it and embrace God's strength?
- Given our frailties, what is the basis of our confidence in overwhelming circumstances? How do we see that confidence in God's servants in the Bible?
- What's the process for taking thoughts captive to Christ? How can we destroy thoughts that are contrary to truth?

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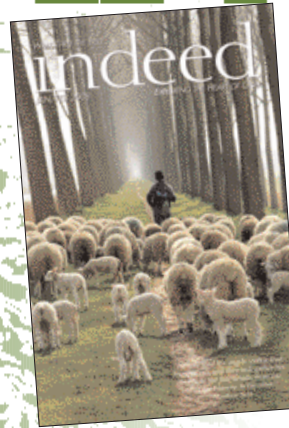
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indeed can be used not only as a personal devotional guide, but also as a teaching or discussion tool for small groups. The following questions will help you go deeper with each week's readings, whether individually or in a group. More *indeed* resources can be found at www.indeedmagazine.org.

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2008

The Christian life is more than a behavioral change. Any religion can give instructions about what to do. The difference for citizens of the kingdom of God is a change of heart. We don't just act differently; we think and feel differently. It's what Paul called the renewal of the mind, and it's an essential priority for the redeemed. We are to drink in the Spirit of wisdom. To do that, we'll focus in 2008 on the many portions of Scripture that impart God's mind to us.

WEEK 1: JANUARY 1-4

Psalm 16

Safety, provision, guidance, and joy are fundamental needs of human life. If we don't understand these aspects of God's will, we'll have a hard time relating to Him. Our minds have to grasp His intense desire to meet our needs. Psalm 16 shows us how David embraced God's goodness.

- Think of a situation in which you needed God as your refuge. How much did you sense His presence? In what ways did He take care of you? How did your experience affect your faith afterward?
- Have you ever felt that your life is out of control? What questions about God did you have? In hindsight, have you seen His providence working on your behalf?
- How is it possible for God to instruct us in the night? Is it good to trust the condition of our heart? Why or why not?
- Why is joy an essential element of the Christian life? How can someone without joy get it?

WEEK 2: JANUARY 7-11

Proverbs 3:1-12

The renewal of the mind doesn't happen through occasional instruction. It requires immersion into a new culture—the environment of God's kingdom. That's why God's Word not only tells

us truth but also how to apply it. Proverbs 3 is one of those practical passages that explains how and why to incorporate wisdom into our lives.

- What characteristics do Deuteronomy 6:4-9 and Proverbs 3:3 share? What practices can a Christian develop to fulfill the intent of these passages?
- Is it okay for a Christian to actively seek God's blessings?
- When we're looking for guidance, how can we tell the difference between God's wisdom and our own?
- What does it mean to "acknowledge" God? How does acknowledging Him result in His guidance?
- How does the fear of the Lord produce wisdom? What do motives indicate about the wisdom of our choices?

WEEK 3: JANUARY 14-18 Proverbs 3:1-12

According to the instructions of Proverbs 3, we'll spend another week dwelling on the wisdom within it. It's a comprehensive wisdom, affecting not only our spiritual thinking, but also our physical bodies and our finances.

- To what degree is God interested in our physical health? What's the relationship between our mind and our health?
- In what ways do our financial decisions reflect our spiritual priorities?
- What exactly does God promise to those who are generous toward Him? In what ways can our finances honor Him?
- What's the difference between God's rebuke and His disapproval? What benefits do His rebukes have for us?
- Do you see God's chastisement as an expression of anger or of love (or both)? In what way is His correction an affirmation of our relationship with Him?

WEEK 4: JANUARY 21-25 Psalm 78

Psalm 78 is a reminder of how graciously God has dealt with His people in the past. It's a clear statement that wisdom is not forgetful. Those who have renewed their mind need not be doomed to repeat history. God hasn't changed. The character He has had in the past is the character He has today.

- Why do you think we can remember past offenses more easily than we can remember past blessings? What practical steps can we take to change that?
- Is discontentment always wrong? Why or why not?
- What causes people to take God's grace for granted? How does God demonstrate that He understands our weaknesses?
- Which is more important to God: the glory of His name or the purity of His people? How are they related?
- In what ways other than his shepherding is David a picture of Jesus?

WEEK 5: JANUARY 28-FEBRUARY 1 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1

We can't put God's truth in our minds as a supplement to what's already there. We have to replace the old with the new.

Sometimes that's a delightful process, but often it's painful. We have to surrender long-held assumptions and habits. But the result is well worth the trouble: it's a life based on ultimate reality.

- In what areas of your life are you most tempted to choose your will over God's? Why are those areas more difficult than others?
- What are some of the ways people justify their idols? How can we discern when we are rationalizing our sin?
- In what way have we already died? In what ways do we still need to?
- How convinced are you that the sacrifices you make for God will be worthwhile? What promises does He give that they will be?
- Think of whatever you value most highly. What do you see as the biggest obstacle to surrendering it to the Lord? Why?

WEEK 6: FEBRUARY 4-8 Proverbs 11:2, 6; Daniel 2:19-23; 4:28-37; 12:1-4

What attracts the favor of God? There may be many attributes that do that, but several come up frequently in Scripture. Those attributes include humility, a hunger for purity, and a passion for His priorities. Those who demonstrate His characteristics will not fail to experience Him.

- Why is God so strongly opposed to pride? How can we cultivate humility in our lives?
- Why are our choices a true measure of our desires? Have you been trapped by your own desires? What did you do to get out of that trap?
- Why does God reveal deep things to some people and not to others? What can you do to attract deeper understanding from Him?
- Do we have anything that did not originate from our Creator? If so, what?
- What's the longest-term investment a person can make? What proportion of your resources—time, money, and talent—is spent on that investment?

WEEK 7: FEBRUARY 11-15 Proverbs 15:8-11, 19

God is concerned primarily with heart issues. How pure is our worship? How easily do we accept correction? How diligent are we with matters of integrity? For our heart to be changed, our mind needs to clearly focus on the nature of God.

- If you had to assess the authenticity of your worship, how would you rate it? What can you do to increase its purity?
- If you had to assess your zeal for righteousness, how would you rate it? What can you do to deepen its intensity?
- How willing are you to accept correction from the Lord? How do you respond when that correction comes through other people? How can you discern when it's truly from Him and when it isn't?
- How does it feel to think that God is staring at your heart