



## **Snooze Series**

### **Small Group Material**

### **Leader Guide**

## **Part 2 - "Avoiding Futility"**

**January 14th, 2018**

**Bottom Line:** *Don't promise to commit, commit to depend.*

**Study Verses:** *Romans 8:1-6, Matthew 26:41-42*

**Define The Win:** *Group members would be able to articulate the differences between a mind set on the spirit and one set on the flesh. They would recognize where they are relying on their own will power and strength to produce change in their lives. Participants would pinpoint where they are reacting to adversity or difficulty with discouragement and, instead, refocus their eyes on what God says is true.*

### **Key Points**

- *What we want can be different from what God wants.*
- *Before you can submit your will to His, you need to believe what you've received.*
- *To watch is to fix your eyes on what is true.*
- *Our flesh is brought into submission to the truth of our willing spirit.*
- *Our spirit is willing, but our flesh is weak. We need to train our flesh to trust.*
- *The flesh can't be trusted. It must be trained for submission.*
- *No matter how strong you make it, your flesh is still weak.*
- *Your spirit (in Christ) is actually willing, ready and prepared for God's will and God's ways.*

- *We buffet our bodies and make them our slaves so that our bodies are servants instead of masters.*
- *The body must be trained to do what the mind says.*
- *Think process rather than perfection and promises.*

## **ENCOUNTER**

- What tends to be your reaction when you encounter adversity in your quest for growth and change or notice old habits making a reappearance?
- What is the danger in relying solely on self willpower to transform your heart, mind and attitude?
- What we want can be different from what God wants. How does one know if their wants line up with what God desires for them? What are some warning signs that our wants lie in opposition to what God wants?
- How does one take responsibility and ownership for change while at the same time relying on the Holy Spirit to guide them?

## **FORMATION**

- Read Romans 8:1-4. Why was our flesh (effort, rule following, etc.) incapable of fulfilling the law and producing change in our heart? What makes our flesh weak?
- Read Romans 8:5-6. What are the two mindsets described in this passage? What makes each one distinct? What are the ramifications of having a mind set on the flesh verses a mind set on the spirit?
- Read Matthew 26:41-42. Why is it important to set our focus on what is true when we are in search of change and transformation?

## **EXPRESSION**

- Where are you relying solely on your own willpower and strength to bring about change in your life? What is fueling this approach?
- Is there something you want that you know is at odds with what God wants for your life? Where does your flesh need to be brought into submission?
- In what circumstances have you encountered a setback, disappointment or frustration? How can you focus your eyes on what is true about yourself as well as God? What truths do you need to remind yourself of?

**LEADER INSIGHT:** *The problem with resolutions and promises lies in their "all or nothing" belief system. It's either perfection or utter failure. One either fixes everything entirely, or they've dropped the ball completely. The pressure this places on our shoulders is often too much to bear. We usually respond by settling for the status quo or relying solely on our strength and will-power to produce the change we desire.*

*When this occurs, a vicious cycle begins to spin out of control. The reliance on ourselves never produces the change we hope for, which in turn amps up our disappointment and frustration. We reason that we just didn't work hard enough this time, so we try and try again, with even more determination. We pull up our bootstraps and exert extra effort, only to inevitably find ourselves coming face-to-face with futility. Rinse and repeat.*

*Here's the hard truth: no matter how strong we make it, our flesh is still weak. If it was capable of transforming our heart and altering our character, there would be no need for Jesus. We could've saved ourselves. Our spirit (in Christ) is willing, ready and prepared for God's will and God's ways. But, even though our spirit is willing, our flesh is weak.*

*The flesh can't be trusted but instead must be trained and brought into submission to the truth of our willing spirit. What are we training our flesh to do? TRUST. We need to prepare our flesh to trust. Before we can submit our will to His, we must believe what we've received in Christ.*

*Our hope for change begins by thinking process over perfection and promises. Rather than promising to commit, we commit to depend. To watch is to fix our eyes on what is true about ourselves and the hope that Christ provides. Keeping in step with the Holy Spirit helps in our tendency to try harder and go ahead without Him. The body must be trained to do what the mind says. We buffet our bodies and make them our slaves so that our bodies are servants instead of masters.*