



## THINK IT THROUGH

RELIGION / WORKS	GOSPEL
"I obey; therefore I am accepted."	- "I... "
My motivation is based on fear and security.	- <i>My motivation is based on...</i>
I obey God in order to get things from God.	- <i>I obey God...</i>
When trials come I am angry because anyone who is good deserves a comfortable life.	- <i>When trials come...</i>
When I am criticised, I am furious or devastated because it is vital that I think of myself as a "good person."	- <i>When I am criticised...</i>
When I am living up to my own standards I feel confident. When I fall short I feel like a failure.	- <i>I am humble and confident at the same time because...</i>
My identity and self-worth are based on how hard I work, or how moral I am. Therefore I look down on those I perceive as lazy / immoral.	- <i>My identity and self-worth are based on..</i>



## PRAY IT THROUGH

**Praise God** that he is the Father who loves and pursues us, whether we are running from him or trying to earn his favour.

**Thank Him** for the costly actions of Jesus Christ, who has given everything and done everything necessary for our salvation.

**Ask God** to forgive you for any self-righteousness and help you live by grace alone. Pray about anything in the table above that you would like to see changed.

# GOSPEL IN LIFE

SMALL GROUPS SHEET  
WEEK BEGINNING 15 SEPTEMBER 2013

## 2. HEART – Three Ways To Live

Oakhall  
CHURCH WELCOMES YOU



## FOR STARTERS

### Follow-up from last week:

Share any ways that God has been stirring your heart this past week to be a blessing to the places where you live / work.

The great reformer Martin Luther once said that religion (trying to earn our salvation) is the default mode of the human heart. Our computers operate automatically in default mode unless we deliberately instruct them to do something different. As Christians, even after we have been transformed by the grace shown to us in Jesus, our hearts will go back to operating on a works / D.I.Y approach to God unless we deliberately and repeatedly set it to gospel-mode. This is one of the basic causes of our spiritual failures, uncontrolled emotions, lack of joy and ineffectiveness as we serve God. We believe the gospel at one level, but at a deeper level we continue to live as if we are saved by our good works. This session will help us identify and address this danger.



## INVESTIGATE

In Sunday evening's DVD we were introduced to "three ways to live" in terms of how we relate to God.

- What approach is demonstrated by the younger son at the start of the parable?
- What approach is demonstrated by the older son?  
How do his attitudes and words reveal where his heart is really at?

It has been said that our rebellious acts and our good deeds are both ways of avoiding Jesus as saviour. Discuss.

*The story is told of a gardener who grew an enormous carrot. He took it to his king and said "My lord, I want to present this to you as a token of my love and respect for you." The king was touched and discern the man's heart, so he said, "I want to give you a plot of land as a free gift so you can cultivate it all." The gardener was amazed and went home rejoicing. Now there was a nobleman*

*at the king's court who overheard all this, and thought to himself, "If that is what you get for a carrot, what if you gave the king something better?" The next day he came before the king with a handsome black stallion and said, "My lord I want to present this to you as a token of my love and respect for you." But the king discerned his heart and said, "Thank you" and took the horse and simply dismissed him. The nobleman was perplexed, so the king said, "Let me explain. The gardener was giving me the carrot, but you were giving yourself the horse."*

- Can you relate to the danger of giving God things in the hope that they will earn you blessings? Can you think of some examples?
- What will help us to change us so that we do good things for God's sake?



## INVESTIGATE

The third way of relating to God is **the gospel way** and involves real repentance and real faith. Discuss the following definitions:

- **Repentance** that saves us is not just being sorry for specific sins. It is also admitting our efforts at trying to be our own saviour. See Galatians 2:21 and 5:4.
- **Faith** is not just subscribing to a set of truths about Jesus. It involves no longer trusting our own work / record and instead trusting Jesus' work / record. See Galatians 2:16 and Romans 3:22-24.



## THINK IT THROUGH

It's often not easy to spot the differences between being religious and trusting Jesus to be our saviour. Try and complete the following table which summarises some of the differences: