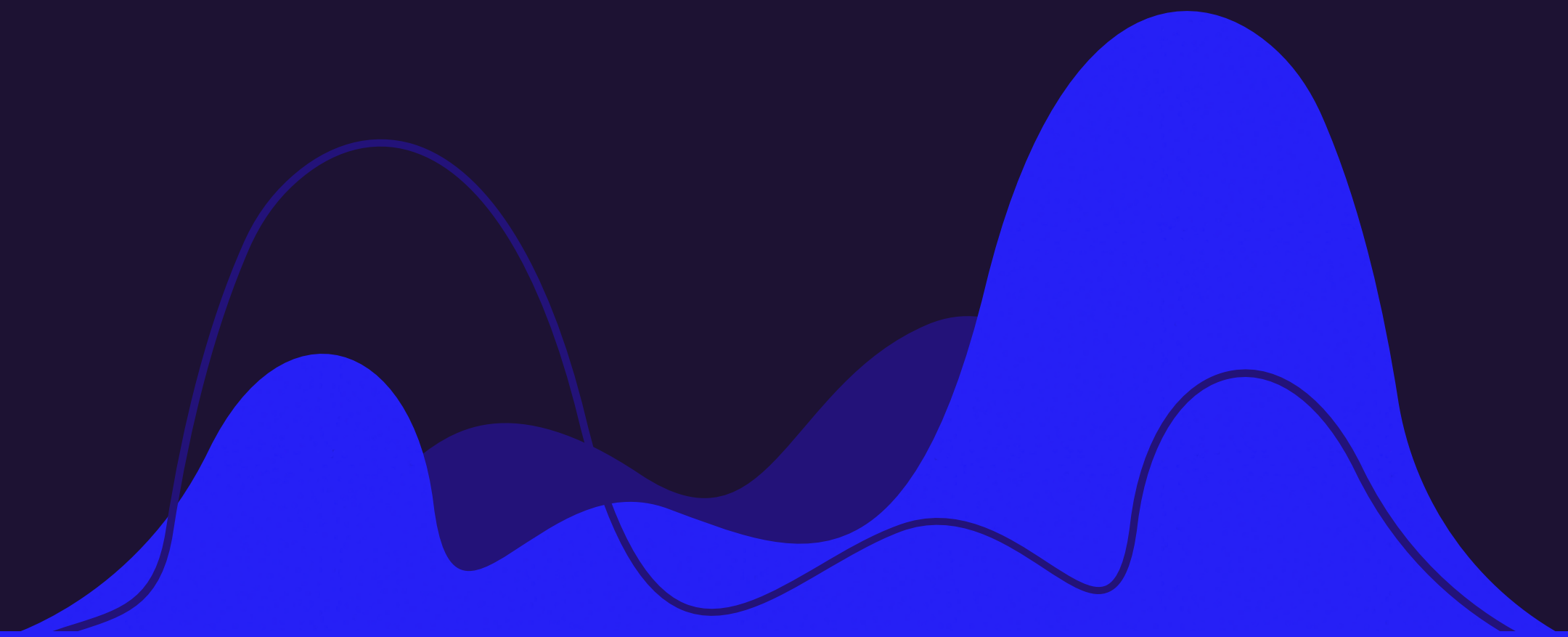


# From The Ground Up

Discovering The Secret Of  
Spiritual Growth



**Week #2: The Shallow Heart**



# Contents

## How To Lead Your YCI Club:

### ● **Play**

Play a game together.

### ● **Pray**

Spend time praising and thanking God in prayer.

### ● **Grow**

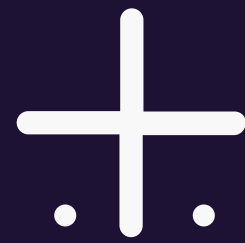
Learn from Scripture about who God says He is and how we should respond to Him.

### ● **Go**

Look for opportunities to share the Gospel, and serve others in your community with your YCI club members.



# On The Spot



First, one person should be chosen as the "Topic Master", and three other people should be chosen as the "Improv Masters" (this number can be adjusted based on the size of the YCI club). It's the role of the Topic Master to choose an imaginary scenario for the Improv Masters to act out in front of the rest of the YCI club (Example: Act out a wedding proposal.). The Improv Masters only have 30 seconds to prepare for their skit, and they have one minute to perform it. There are no winners and losers in this game. It's all about laughing and having fun!



# Ask God For His Will To Be Done In These Areas:



## Club Time

Pray that God will speak to everyone in the room through His Word.



## Group Needs

Take time to discuss and pray over the personal needs and requests of those in attendance.



## School Community

Ask God to move in situations that are unique to your school and community.



## What Is The "Secret" Of Spiritual Growth?

In Mark 4:1-9, Jesus shares a simple parable that has profound implications. If the disciples don't understand this parable, they won't understand any of His teachings (Mark 4:13).

In His explanation in Mark 4:14-20, Jesus highlights three primary elements that are essential to our growth as Christians:

1) **The Sower:** God is the ultimate creator and sustainer of life, and He will forever be the "Sower". Jesus Himself is the fullness of the Godhead in bodily form (Col. 2:9).

Without surrendering to God, we have no hope of growing in Him.

2) **The Seed:** This is the Word of God (Jesus Himself revealed in the Bible) given by the Sower. God's Word will remain steadfast forever (Is. 40:8). It is the *only* source of absolute truth, and it holds the answers to the questions of our world.

3) **The Soil:** This represents the heart (mind, will and emotions) of the person that the Sower (God) sows the Seed (the Word) into. This is the *only* ingredient of spiritual growth that is within our power to develop.

In each installment of this curriculum, we will look at one of the four "heart" conditions (described using soil) to discover how we can better understand God's Word and walk in our purpose!



## The Shallow Heart

### Mark 4:5-6 / 16-17 (ESV)

#### The Illustration

"5 Other seed fell on rocky ground, where it did not have much soil, and immediately it sprang up, since it had no depth of soil. 6 And when the sun rose, it was scorched, and since it had no root, it withered away."

**(Mark 4:5-6 ESV)**

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#### The Explanation

"16 And these are the ones sown on rocky ground: the ones who, when they hear the word, immediately receive it with joy. 17 And they have no root in themselves, but endure for a while; then, when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately they fall away."

**(Mark 4:16-17 ESV)**



## How Do You Deepen A Shallow Heart?



### **Slow Down**

The first indicator Jesus gives of someone with a shallow heart is that they "*immediately* receive it [the Word] with joy" (Mark 4:16). The key here is to understand the difference between *hearing* and *listening*. If all we do is *hear* God's Word without taking the time to *listen* and consider its true meaning, our heart will remain shallow. We must slow down and take time to consider the implications of what He is saying to us!



### **Look Closer**

As we slow down to consider God's Words, it provides space for us to truly *study* what He is saying. In order to deepen our understanding, it helps to ask these questions of the text: 1. Who is the author, and who are they writing to?; 2. What was the culture like when the words were written?; 3. What do these words reveal about God's character and the "big picture" story of Scripture?; 4. What do these words reveal about my character?; 5. How can I put these words into action?



### **Endure Difficulty**

When we are facing difficult situations (Mark 4:17), the easiest response is to sacrifice truth for comfort. However, when we choose to trust that God is faithful no matter the situation, our understanding of His Word will deepen.



# Let's Talk About This

*Small Group Questions If Time Allows*

## Question 1



What is one thing that "jumped out" to you while reading these verses?

## Question 2



What are some practical things we can do to *slow down* and *look closer* at God's Word?

## Question 3



Can you describe a time when enduring a difficult situation helped you grow in your relationship with God?





# Consider This Before You Leave

## Big Idea

In order to deepen a shallow heart, we must *slow down* when we read or listen to God's Word, *look closer* at what is being said and *endure difficult situations* by trusting God's faithfulness.

## Sharing Truth

Who is someone in your life that needs to hear about what we discussed today? Pray for them, and find time this week to encourage them.

## Meeting Needs

What is something your YCI club can do to show God's love this semester?



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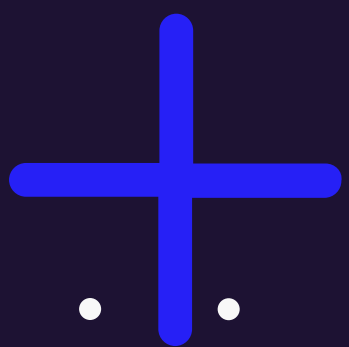
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