

START OVER AGAIN  
SERIES

# DISCUSSION

## Guide

H

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### START OVER AGAIN - Aaron McRae

This Discussion Guide is designed to help you **think more deeply** about the sermon and **engage with others** through thoughtful conversation, biblical exploration and **allow God to work** in your life as you apply what you discover.

#### ➤ CONVERSATION STARTERS

Have you ever made a New Year's resolution? If so, what was it and did you keep it?

#### ➤ EXPLORATION

The beginning of a new year is often a time when people make resolutions to improve their lives, and to change their behavior or habits in the days ahead.

Typical New Year's resolutions might include things like:

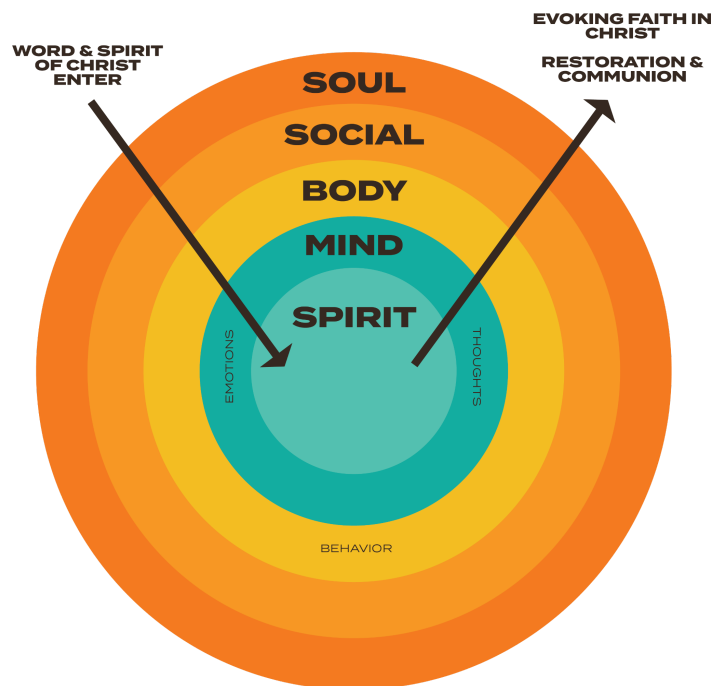
- Body - eat better, exercise, get more rest...
- Mind - read, study, learn new things...
- Relationships - build friendships, express care...

All of these are good and important things to focus on in the year ahead. But how often do we pay attention to our soul? What would it look like to take care of your soul? How is your soul?

For the next few weeks we will look at what the bible says about our souls and learn how we can be more intentional about caring for it.

This is not about self-care, it's about soul-care. For our purposes here, we are looking at the soul as what integrates our lives into a cohesive whole.

Theologian and Author, Dallas Willard, uses the following model to illustrate the idea of the soul encompassing our whole being.



In his book, *Keystone Habits*, Charles Duhigg says,

Keystone habits are “small changes or habits that people introduce into their routines that unintentionally carry over into other aspects of their lives.”

Practicing good habits can create a domino effect into other areas of our life. The soul encompasses our mind, body and spirit, it is the integration of our whole being. The word translated as 'soul' is used over 750 times in the Old Testament. Here are a few examples:

**Deuteronomy 6:4-5 (From your bible read aloud)**

**Psalm 119:175 (From your bible read aloud)**

**Psalm 42:1-2 (From your bible read aloud)**

## How do these verses help you understand the importance of the soul?

The deepest human longing is not for wealth, beauty, fame...in the depths of our soul we long for the living God. His presence is our most innate desire, whether we know it or not.

*“Your soul is designed by God to integrate and enliven all aspects of your person – spiritual, psychological, and physical – to flow in love and wholeness.” ~Dr Jeff McCrory*

The idea of integration here is much like a puzzle, with its pieces placed intentionally together. When pieces of a puzzle are scattered around, they are not integrated. The pieces still exist, but they are not creating the whole picture that the artist intended.

The concept of the soul is not only found in the Old Testament. Jesus also speaks about the soul in the New Testament.

**Mark 8:36-37 (From your bible read aloud)**

**Matthew 10:28 (From your bible read aloud)**

Tending to your soul is important. As we are intentional about soul-care, we turn to Jesus and accept his invitation to find true rest for our soul.

**Matthew 11:28-30 (From your bible read aloud)**

The invitation from Jesus in verse 28 says, **“Come to me...”** This is a relational invitation not a transaction. It is intimate, not just intellectual. It is personal, but it is also corporate - 'you all' come to me.

This invitation is to all who are **weary and burdened**. It takes into account the realities of daily life with its

stresses and challenges. It does not require perfection, it is open to all who are actively carrying too much and are exhausted from trying too hard.

When Jesus says, **“Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart...”** we see his posture toward us. He is offering something that we are being invited to take. It is a gift meant for our benefit.

The verse goes on to say, **“...and you will find rest for your souls.”**

## What do you think 'rest for your soul' would look and feel like?

The kind of rest Jesus refers to is a holistic rest. It is not just physical rest for our bodies or even emotional rest in our relationships, this is rest for your whole being.

### Rest For Your Soul

- Speaks of salvation
- Speaks of intimacy
- Speaks of trust
- Speaks of a new identity
- Speaks of an all encompassing, Christ-centered focus.

## > TAKE AWAY

Take some time to reflect on the following questions and then talk through your responses together.

### Questions for Reflection

- How is your soul?
- Where do you hurt?  
(Physical / Emotional / Relational / Spiritual)
- Where are you? Are you present / attentive?
- Are you living in authentic community?
- Is your mind being renewed and guarded?
- Are you honoring your body / your limits?
- Is Christ central to all of your life?

**Take some time to pray together. Ask God to help you connect with Him and find rest for your soul this week.**