



## Lesson 2: Intervention

### I. **LOVING (10 Min)** ~ *What do you wish you could change?*

- A. Your weight
- B. A bad habit
- C. The way you interact with “that” person
- D. An addiction
- E. Your feelings toward God
- F. Your anger at unforeseen circumstances.

#### **Share with one to two persons and then share with whole group:**

1. Why is it easier to see what others need to change than working on your own changes?
2. Have you had to make an intervention? On yourself? On behalf of someone else?

### II. **LEARNING** ~

- A. **In the Know (15 Min)** ~ Read aloud, if more than 7, break into groups of 4 to discuss.

Rehab is a journey into a very hard place. It is about taking up the cross and denying yourself. It is about following a leader or a program or a Savior into the hard place of suffering, rejection, and even death. Rehab requires that we give up control for the time being and let someone else tell us what to do.

It may be publically humiliating to have to go to rehab. It may be hard to confess your sin and ask for help. It is humbling to admit that you can't fix it on your own, that the disease or the evil has gained control over you, and that you need intervention to get out from underneath the weight of your problem. But no matter what difficulties we face, after taking the first step—admitting we have a problem—we have to take the second step of entering into a time of pain and suffering. The only way to survive is to take a deep breath, trust in the people who love us and in the healing power of grace, and walk bravely into the depths of despair, whatever it may be.

If we try to preserve ourselves by ignoring or denying that we have a problem, be it with our heart, or with drugs, or with alcohol, or with sex, or food, or PTSD, or whatever it is from which we need to recover, then we risk death. We risk not just physical death, but spiritual death as well.



Being a follower of Jesus means that we bravely head into the storms that life sends our way. It means we walk into the suffering that life brings, not just to us, but to others. And if we aren't following Jesus into the path that leads to suffering, then we are heading in the wrong direction.

Because being a Christian is not a magic pill that we can take to avoid the suffering that is part of life. The good news is that we know when we are in Christ, pain and suffering, evil and death, no longer have dominion over us. We know that on the other side of the pain and the suffering of rehab is the promise of resurrection. Jesus promises that when we willingly give up our lives, do whatever it takes, even suffer and die, it is through this path that we will find eternal healing and life everlasting.

**Share your thoughts about intervention.**

1. What is the breaking point at which you know you need to make a change?
2. How does your faith both challenge you and encourage when you are in hard places?

**B. Reflection on the Scriptures (20 Min) ~ One person read the following passages and another read the background.**

Then he began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, 'Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things.'

He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, 'If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? Indeed, what can they give in return for their life? Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels' (Mark 8:31-38).

**Background:**

Peter hoped Jesus would meet his expectations for a Jewish Messiah. Probably like many other Jews of this time, Peter hoped for a Messiah who would conquer the Romans and setup a physical throne to rule over a faithful Israel. When Jesus hinted at something different (that the Messiah would not only suffer but die!), Peter was willing to confront Jesus. Peter's attempt was really about control. He wanted Jesus to conform to his expectations. However, Jesus rebuked Peter's attempt at manipulation and control.

This rebuke is quickly followed by a challenge, "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me." This challenge highlights a central principle of change: change demands action. It is not enough to hear the words of Jesus; we must also act upon them.



**Questions for Discussion ~ If more than 7, break into groups of 4 to discuss.**

1. Have you ever been rebuked?
2. What does Jesus' example teach us about suffering?
3. How can denying yourself open you to God?

**III. LEADING ~ Making it Personal (10 Min)**

- A. Not many adults like to admit they've made mistakes or have been to rehab. While some adults might wear physical therapy as a badge, few are willing to admit their need for emotional and relational help. What might this reveal about our human condition?
- B. How does our need to feel in control play a role in our unwillingness to admit our need for outside help?
- C. When Jesus rebuked Peter, might there be a rebuke for us as well? What might Jesus' rebuke of us be?

**Close in Prayer (5 Min)**