

# LIVING WELL: 5 CONVERSATIONS ABOUT LIFE AND DISCERNMENT

## LIVING WELL: WEEK TWO

Soul | Mind | Body | Strength |  
| Heart |

“Wellness is a popular topic these days... So why is there a need for one more book about wellness? Because this book approaches wellness from a unique perspective – focusing on the integration of wellness and Christian Spirituality.”

The concept of living well in thought, word and deed is central to this book. Our thoughts, words, and deeds are all interrelated, each part affecting the others. Our thoughts influence our words and deeds. And our deeds, our actions, shape our thoughts and words. [...] Each section closes with a “Thought, Word and Deed section”. Take some time to reflect on the questions, journaling if necessary, to help you clarify. Then reflect on whether you might be called to **do** something different (in thought, word or deed) moving forward.

“There is a saying from the twelve-step movement that we have to ‘do different, to get different.’” The intention of this study is to help you reflect on your current way of doing things, in order to “get different.”

“The reality is that each of us already has a ‘living’ compass. Each of us has a compass that is directing and guiding the day-to-day decisions we make in our lives, whether we know it or not. Our compass is a combination of our beliefs, thoughts, core values, self-identity, passions, and ideals, and is always orienting our lives and daily decisions.

This series is designed to help you reflect on the compass or compasses that are orienting you in eight areas of wellness. IN each of these areas you will be invited to reflect on which compass is guiding the choices and decisions you make. [...] After you reflect on [what is] guiding your decisions, you will be asked to consider the impact on your well-being.” Is this what God wants for you? What you want for you?

- Scott Stoner (p.1-15)

## THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

Fall 2021

### How-to:

1. Find **five times to meet** with your group between September 19 and November 7. Groups should be no fewer than 2(!) and no more than 10 people.
2. **Resist the urge** to focus on “what you will get” from this small group. Instead, ask yourself how you can contribute to this group, and what God is going to do through you because of this new community.
3. **Keep in mind** that healthy small groups will develop with an **investment** of time and a collection of shared experiences, and will flourish where there is trust and grace. Earn each other's trust by keeping **confidential** the personal details people share. Extend grace and respect to one another when you disagree on theology or on another topic. It will happen, and that's okay. As business leadership author Stephen R. Covey wrote, “Strength lies in differences, not in similarities.”
4. **Pray**. Open with a check-in (a high/low from the week and/or an experience of God), so you bring all of yourselves to the meeting. Close with prayer requests for the week, that you might hold one another in prayer.
5. **Use the self-assessment** tools at the back of the book as the basis for your discussions each week.

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**BOOK PAGES 46-78**  
**Assessments Pages 159-160**

### SCRIPTURE:

*"Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms. If anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised"*

-1 Peter 4:10-11

*"Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also"*

- Luke 12:34

### SELF-REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

Pages 49, 53, 56, 59, 62, 65, 69, 72, 75, 78

1. What thoughts or feelings did the Vocation self-assessment bring up for you? The organization assessment?
2. Based on those assessments, is there anything different you want to do related to your understanding of your vocation?
3. What makes your face shine? When have you experienced a sense of flow?
4. Who has been a "voice teacher" for you? Do you know your own voice?
5. Did the section on grief and possessions (p.73) speak to you in any way? What are you holding on to?

### FOR YOUR TIME TOGETHER:

**Start** by reading numbers 3-5 on the first page, and then sharing what motivated you to join this group. For this week, instead of sharing an experience of God, share the first thing that comes to mind when you think about God.

1. Discuss the "Activity for Reflection" from last week. What did you do differently this week. How did it go?
2. Read together "Just Bring Yourself" on pages 50-51. What makes your face shine?
3. Where are you hearing the Spirit's voice in your life right now?
4. What role has your faith had in influencing the story of your life? Would you like it to play more of a role?
5. When you listen to yourselves talk about how busy you are, or how you manage your time, what do you hear yourselves saying? Are you satisfied with that?
6. What are the top ten priorities in your life right now?
7. Decide which segments you want to highlight, either as a group leader, or as a group. I might suggest reflection 5 under vocation (p.59-61) and reflection 5 under "organization" (p.76)

**Finish** by sharing your joys and concerns with one another. Write them down if it will help you remember them. Pray over them for each other during the upcoming week.

**Closing Prayer:** Use either of the prayers Stoner mentions on p. 15 as your closing – or say your own!

### \*ACTIVITY FOR REFLECTION DURING THE WEEK\*:

Many people take a passive approach to time management, acting as if they have very little control over their schedules and time commitments. What is one small change you could make that would improve the way you are currently organizing and managing your time?