



21 GRAMS

The Most Important Part of You

#NP21GRAMS

Week 1
1 of 5
October 2, 2016

Bottom Line: Your soul is not just something that lives on after your body dies. Rather, your soul is the most important thing about you – it's your life.

Icebreaker: When most people say the word "soul," what do they mean? How is their definition both similar and different from those of followers of Jesus?

Key Verse: *For you were like sheep going astray, but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.* 1 Peter 2:25

Today we start a new series called 21 Grams, which refers to the weight of a human soul from a theory proposed by Massachusetts doctor, Duncan MacDougall. While these assertions are largely unproven, we can know beyond a shadow of a doubt that each man and woman made in the image of God has a soul. For the month of October, we will be talking about the soul.

The word "soul" refers to much more than the part of you that stays behind after your body dies. The soul is the life center of human beings. In other words, the soul is the integration of the various parts of a person: body, mind, and will. It also drives our connections with the rest of creation and with God. All human beings possess an eternal soul. Both believers and unbelievers have a soul; the crucial difference is that the eternal destination of the nurtured soul is entirely different than that of the unnurtured soul.

The Bible tells us that Jesus is the overseer of our souls. Whereas we were once walking by ourselves headed for destruction, we have been brought into God's flock where Christ is the Chief and Good Shepherd. When we walk with Him, our souls become healthy. This is how we were meant to live. Soul care is the most important thing you can do for yourself on a regular basis because it recalibrates everything in your life and drives you to live for the glory of God, day in and day out.

THINK IT OVER >>>

Thinking back on Dwight's message, what stood out to you?

Dwight said that the symptoms of an unhealthy soul are inferiority, insecurity, inadequacy, guilt, and anxiety. He said that until your soul is healthy, you'll never have alignment with your will, mind, and body.

If Jesus has become the overseer of your soul, what does that tell you about your relationship with Him? Why should you look to Him again and again?

What would happen to sheep if they took their focus off their shepherd for too long? What happens to us if we do this with our Good Shepherd?

LOOK IT OVER <<<

Soul care happens primarily when we spend time alone being led by our Shepherd through His Word and through prayer. What do these disciplines look like in your weekly rhythms?

How would you describe the shape of your soul right now? How should you respond when you feel this part of your life coming out of sync?

Do you know how to worship God personally (aka have a quiet time)? If not, would you consider asking someone who does this week? There is no reason to be embarrassed. Every Christian is at a different level of maturity, and we can all learn from one another.

How will you begin to pay more attention to this aspect of your life?

NEXT STEPS

This week, consider taking some next steps together, as a group:

1. We are recommending the book, *Soul Care*, by Pastor John Ortberg to go along with this series. Are two or more people in the group planning to read this book? Consider meeting together once a week outside of the normal group meeting time to go over what you are reading there and in the Dailys, and how you are applying both to your life.
2. Praise God for giving you the ability to relate to Him with heart, soul, mind, and strength. Ask that you would see the importance of your soul, take care of it, and nurture it by filling yourself with God's Word. Pray that as you learn to nurture your soul, you would feel the peace and care of your Good Shepherd.

EVALUATION/ACTION Realizing and reaching your full potential in Christ

Bottom Line: Your soul is the most important thing about you. It is your life.

Rate yourself from 1 to 10 1 (never), 10 (always)	1	2	3	4		6	7	8	9	10
Why did you give yourself this rating?										
What benefits will you obtain by raising your rating?										
Do you know someone who demonstrates this bottom line well? What do you admire about that person?										
What specific action can you put into practice to raise your rating?										
At the end of this week, reflect - where did you see the bottom line show up in your actions throughout the week?										

PRAYER

List group members and their prayer requests for this week:

DAILY STUDY

Want to dig deeper? Check out **The Daily** this week at newpointe.org/daily:

- Day 1: Genesis 2:7
- Day 2: Matthew 10:28
- Day 3: Matthew 16:24-28
- Day 4: Colossians 3:1-4
- Day 5: Philippians 2:3-4

Don't let the conversation stop here. Keep talking it over with others throughout the week.
(Don't forget to bring this paper to your next small group meeting)