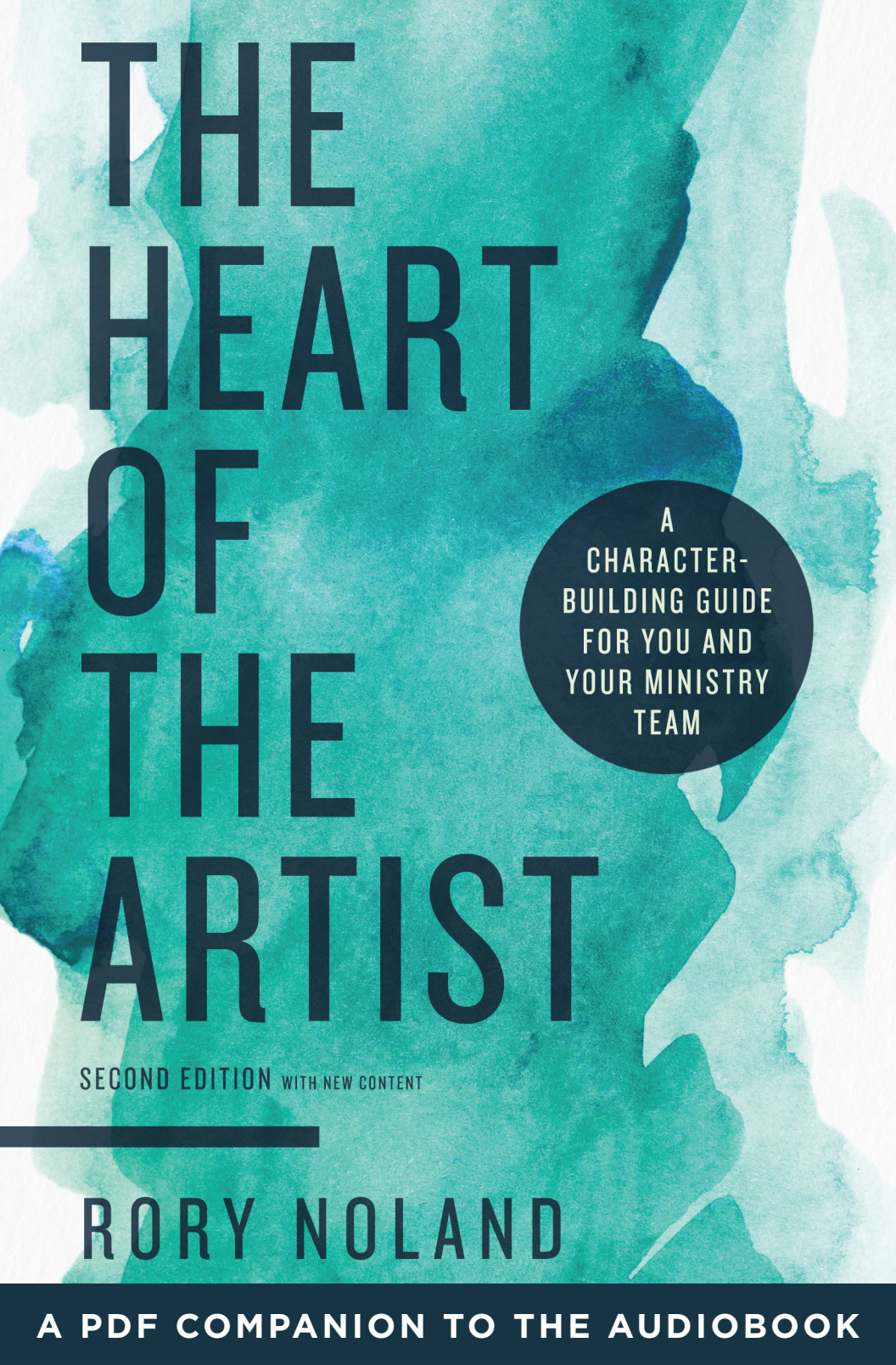




THE HEART OF THE ARTIST

A
CHARACTER-
BUILDING GUIDE
FOR YOU AND
YOUR MINISTRY
TEAM

SECOND EDITION WITH NEW CONTENT

RORY NOLAND

A PDF COMPANION TO THE AUDIOBOOK

ZONDERVAN REFLECTIVE

The Heart of the Artist, Second Edition

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Questions for Group Discussion

1. If you were Sean, would you take the job at Smalltown Community Church? Why or why not?
2. What do you think Sean's first year would be like if he accepted this job?
3. Do you think Sean and Pastor Blair would make a good team? Why or why not?
4. The worship ministry at Pastor Blair's church seems to have some "problem people." How would you handle them?
5. Do you think the problems in the worship department at Pastor Blair's church are extreme or typical of many churches?
6. Does the church have any obligation to those who are going through difficult times, like the couple who is having marriage problems?
7. What would it take for the arts to thrive in a church like Pastor Blair's?
8. What would it take for artists to thrive in this church?

TAKING INVENTORY QUESTIONS

SERVANTHOOD

1. How often do you put the needs of others ahead of your own?
 - a. Most often.
 - b. Sometimes.
 - c. I hardly ever think about it.

2. How did you respond the last time you were asked to serve out of the spotlight and behind the scenes?
 - a. I did it with joy.
 - b. I didn't like it, but I did it anyway.
 - c. It made me angry.

TEAMWORK

1. Are you using your artistic talents at church and experiencing genuine community with a group of Christian artists?
 - a. Yes.
 - b. I'm not currently serving at church.
 - c. I have no meaningful relationships with other Christian artists.

2. How are you at resolving relational conflict in your life?
 - a. I always try to go straight to the individual and talk.
 - b. Most of the time I try to talk it out with the person.
 - c. I hate confrontation, so I suppress my feelings when people hurt me.

PERFECTIONISM

1. Do you entertain thoughts in your head that you're not good enough as an artist?
 - a. Not very often.
 - b. Sometimes.
 - c. Just about all the time.

2. Are you hard on yourself when you make a mistake?
 - a. No.
 - b. Sometimes.
 - c. Yes, I can be very hard on myself.

DEFENSIVENESS

1. Has anyone ever said that they feel as if they have to walk on eggshells around you?
 - a. Never.
 - b. Sometimes.
 - c. I hear that from people all the time.

2. How do you respond to constructive criticism?
 - a. I welcome feedback and regularly invite it from others.
 - b. It's hard, but I usually accept it with grace.
 - c. I feel hurt.

JEALOUSY AND ENVY

1. How do you respond to someone with more talent or success than you?
 - a. I praise God for bestowing talent on that person and for gifting me as well.
 - b. It's hard, but I try not to let it affect me.
 - c. I turn inward and feel inadequate and inferior.

2. When you run across someone with more talent or success than you, does it make you want to give up being an artist?
 - a. Never.
 - b. Sometimes.
 - c. Often.

MANAGING YOUR EMOTIONS

1. Has anyone ever told you that you're too negative or moody?
 - a. Never.
 - b. Sometimes.
 - c. I hear that often.

2. Do you ever sense that you're being controlled by your emotions?
 - a. Never.
 - b. Sometimes.
 - c. Yes, I often feel controlled by my emotions.

LEADING ARTISTS

1. If you're a leader who is also an artist, do you ever sense any tension between the two roles?
 - a. No, never.
 - b. Sometimes.
 - c. Yes, I don't see how I can adequately fulfill both roles.

2. If you lead a team of artists, how well are they following you?
 - a. I feel inept at leading artists.
 - b. We've got conflict on the team and I don't know how to resolve it.
 - c. We all seem to be moving together in the right direction.

SIN

1. Are there any ongoing sins or bad habits in your life right now?
 - a. No.
 - b. No, but there are a couple of areas in which I struggle at times.
 - c. I'm struggling with a certain sin, and I don't know what to do about it.

2. Do you have anybody in your life to whom you're accountable regarding sin?
- a. Yes.
 - b. I have accountability in my life, but it's not strong or consistent.
 - c. I have no accountable relationships in my life right now.

SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES

1. Do you have a regular quiet time with the Lord or practice regular devotions?
- a. Yes.
 - b. I try, but it's hard for me to be consistent.
 - c. I'm just not very disciplined in this area.
2. Do you feel that you have a good relationship with the Lord these days?
- a. My relationship with God is going well.
 - b. I'm feeling dry spiritually these days.
 - c. I feel far away from the Lord right now.

Follow-Up Questions for Group Discussion

1. Does the phrase artistic temperament have a negative connotation for you? Why or why not?
2. What kind of art moves you the most?
3. In your opinion, what should the role of the arts be in church?
4. How can the church become more of a safe place for artists?
5. What's the best way for the church to help artists grow in character?
6. Share an area of your life that has changed since you became a Christian. How did that change happen?
7. Why is it hard for people to change?
8. What has helped you in the past to grow spiritually?

Questions for Group Discussion

1. Amber would never call herself a prima donna, yet she was perceived as one. What behavior on her part communicated a greater-than-thou attitude?
2. Do you think the pastor did the right thing in confronting Amber about her attitude? Why or why not?
3. Should people like Amber be confronted, or should we leave them alone and tolerate them?
4. What makes it difficult to confront people like Amber?
5. How would you feel if you were one of the vocalists Amber reprimanded in front of everyone else? Or one of the instrumentalists she cut down? Or the sound technician she mistreated?
6. What is it about the stage and public ministry that makes it difficult for an artist to have a servant's heart?
7. In your opinion, what characterizes a true servant of Christ?

Follow-Up Questions for Group Discussion

1. What do you think Jesus, as the prime example of servanthood, would be like at rehearsal?
2. What do you think Jesus would be like on the platform leading worship?
3. Can you think of someone in your life who's been a positive example of servanthood? What is it about him or her that stands out in your mind?
4. Where would you put yourself on the humility continuum? With empty conceit on one end and false humility on the other, which end of the spectrum do you lean toward?
5. What does servanthood look like in your ministry?
6. What kinds of things keep artists from being able to serve an audience of one?
7. Why, in your opinion, is it difficult for artists to have healthy boundaries when it comes to their work?
8. How can an artist be a confident person and still have a servant's heart?

Questions for Group Discussion

1. What do you appreciate most about the team you're serving on in your church (the choir, the worship team, the vocal team, the band or orchestra, the dance team, the sound, video, or lighting team, the visual arts team)?
2. In our opening scenario, Jacob suggests that a lot of people are upset and everybody feels a certain way. Do you think statements like that are blown out of proportion, or could they be true?
3. Do you think it was healthy for Paul to vent his anger and frustration with Jacob? Why or why not?
4. In your opinion, what are some of the advantages to doing ministry in teams?
5. What are some of the challenges of doing ministry in teams?
6. If Satan wanted to undermine the unity of your team, how might he go about it?
7. Have you ever been on a successful team of any kind (an athletic team, a team of workers, a music group, a drama or dance club)? What made that team successful?

Follow-Up Questions for Group Discussion

1. Can you think of something your team has done recently that would be an example of coming together to do what no one of you could do alone?
2. How can you use your spiritual gift at rehearsals or meetings?
3. How can you encourage or bless someone on your team this week?
4. What spiritual gifts are represented by members of your team?
How can those gifts contribute to your team's overall success?
5. It has been said that fellowship, or community, is the art of knowing and being known. Are you better at one than the other, or are you pretty good at both? Explain.
6. Which of the five characteristics of a team player, listed in this chapter, represents an area of needed growth in your life? Make a commitment to the Lord, to your team, or to your leader to grow in that area.
7. How can your team become even more effective in ministry this next year?

Questions for Group Discussion

1. Why did Ellen end up so miserable?
2. What are some indications that Ellen is a perfectionist?
3. If Ellen were to come to you for advice, what would you tell her?
4. What would it take to restore Ellen's love for music?
5. What kind of frustration is in store for those who know or live with a perfectionist?
6. What do you think God feels for the perfectionist?
7. Have you ever walked away from a conversation kicking yourself for something you said? Have you done this recently?
8. Have you ever made a mistake in a performance and played it over and over in your mind? What was that like for you?

Follow-Up Questions for Group Discussion

1. Do you see any signs of perfectionism in your life? Go through the following list and put a check by any of the tendencies you see in yourself.
 - ___ Minimizing the positive, maximizing the negative
 - ___ The dot syndrome (looking at a small flaw and ignoring the overall good)
 - ___ Polarized thinking (either all bad or all good)
 - ___ Negative self-talk
 - ___ Self-esteem based on what you do instead of who you are in Christ
 - ___ Unrealistically high expectations
 - ___ Loss of joy
2. How can you savor something you've done recently that God has blessed?
3. What's preventing you from knowing and believing that God loves you?
4. In what situations do you tend to set expectations that are too high? What suggestions do you have to help someone rediscover the joy of being an artist?
5. How would you express in your own words the difference between striving for perfection and pursuing excellence?

6. What is the next step for you in your development as an artist?

What can you do to challenge yourself artistically?

7. What does it mean for you to bring God your best in your role at church?

8. How can you improve your communication skills as an artist?

9. What can you do to prepare yourself spiritually for the next time you serve?

Questions for Group Discussion

1. Why, do you think, did Justin react negatively to every suggestion Sam made?
2. Why did Justin take criticism so personally?
3. What would you suggest Justin do to mend his relationship with Sam?
4. What should Sam do next to try to patch things up with Justin?
5. Is there any way the tension between Justin and Sam could have been avoided? What could they have done differently that would have enabled them to work together more harmoniously?
6. How does a defensive spirit affect rehearsals?
7. How do you think an artist should handle criticism?
8. What happens to an artist when he or she is not open to constructive criticism?
9. What is the best way to give feedback to an artist?

Follow-Up Questions for Group Discussion

1. How do you best receive feedback?
2. What stands out to you in this chapter regarding the dangers of defensiveness?
3. Why is defensiveness such a blind spot for people?
4. What, in your opinion, causes an artist to be defensive?
5. What advice do you have for someone who struggles with defensiveness?
6. How does a defensive spirit affect a team's ability to function optimally?
7. Have you known any defensive people in your life? How did their defensiveness affect you?
8. What ground rules for critiquing would you suggest for your team?

Questions for Group Discussion

1. What would you do if you were Sarah?
2. How would you counsel Sarah to deal with her anger?
3. Do you think the pastor handled this situation very well? If not, how should he have handled it?
4. Do you think Sarah did the right thing by declining to be involved with the dance ministry under Mariah's leadership? Why or why not?
5. What lessons might God want Sarah to learn through this?
6. What lessons might God want the pastor to learn from this?
7. What lessons might God want Mariah to learn through this?
8. How common is jealousy and envy among artists in the church? Do you think it's a major problem?

Follow-Up Questions for Group Discussion

1. What would make it hard for artists to talk about feelings of jealousy or envy they might have toward another artist?
2. Do you think the Christian community does an adequate job of addressing the problem of jealousy and envy? Why or why not?
3. Have you ever seen a relationship strained or ended by jealousy or envy? What was that like?
4. What do you think prevents us from being content with the talents we've been given?
5. In what ways could healthy competition benefit an artistic community? When is competition bad for a team of artists?
6. Which of the five suggestions for dealing with jealousy and envy—confess it as sin, stop comparing, appreciate your God-given talents, develop relationships instead of rivalries, turn envy into worship—do you feel is most important?
7. How can people with similar gifts and talents cultivate friendship?

Questions for Group Discussion

1. Do you approve of how the small group reacted to Dan's sharing? If not, how do you think they should have responded?
2. Do you think Dan had good reason to be down, or was he just being moody?
3. Have you ever experienced anything similar to what happened to Dan? What was that like for you?
4. Dan could have suppressed his feelings and shared something a lot safer. Do you think that would have been a good idea? Why or why not?
5. What challenges await those who wear their emotions on their sleeve?
6. How do you react to someone who's predominantly negative, critical, or moody?
7. How can you tell if you're being controlled by your emotions?

Follow-Up Questions for Group Discussion

1. As you were growing up, were you allowed to express your emotions freely, or were you taught to suppress them?
2. Why do you think it's awkward for people to encounter someone who's down or sad?
3. What should you do if you suspect someone is trying to get attention by creating his or her own emotional turmoil?
4. How do you feel when you're around someone who's constantly negative or critical? How does their attitude affect you?
5. What does it mean to dwell on God's truth? What are some ways to do that?
6. How can throwing yourself into worship help you manage your emotions?
7. How might it affect Sunday worship if your worship team were to practice gratitude on a regular basis?
8. How would it affect your church if congregation members were more content and filled with gratitude?

Questions for Group Discussion

1. Is it true that volunteering at church is more fun than leading?
2. What characterizes a great leader, in your opinion?
3. Can someone with an artistic temperament be a good leader?
Why or why not?
4. How is it possible to meet all the demands and responsibilities of being a leader in the church?
5. If you were Tyler, what would you do to develop a better working relationship with the pastor?
6. What suggestions do you have for Tyler to help him manage his time?
7. How important do you think it might be for Tyler to write songs, like he used to? What changes do you think he needs to make in his job to allow him more time to write?
8. What words of advice do you have for someone starting out in church work?
9. If you're a leader, what do you struggle with most in your role?

Follow-Up Questions for Group Discussion

1. Have you experienced any tension between being an artist and being a leader? What has that been like for you?
2. What can you do to make sure that your artistic talent doesn't get lost amid all the duties and demands of leadership?
3. Can you remember your favorite choir director or drama director or some leader who inspired you to go farther with your talent? What was it about this leader that inspired you so much?
4. What, in your opinion, characterizes an effective spiritual leader?
5. What are some examples of things leaders can do to help their artists grow spiritually?
6. Which of the five keys for nurturing artists (being sensitive, loving them, exhorting them, encouraging them, imploring them) do you think is most important and why?
7. What are some of the biggest challenges facing you as a ministry leader these days?
8. If you're a leader, what would you like to say at this time to those you lead?
9. If you're under someone's leadership, is there anything you'd like to say to your leader?

Questions for Group Discussion

1. What bad decisions did Matt make that contributed to his fall?
2. What bad decisions did Veronica make?
3. What caused this affair? What factors enabled it to happen?
4. What were the consequences of the affair?
5. How could the affair have been avoided?
6. Would you feel comfortable confronting someone if you saw him or her involved with sin? Why or why not?
7. Do you agree with how the church handled this situation? If not, how should the church have handled it?
8. How prevalent do you think the problem of pornography is today among Christians?

FIG. 1

Jesus Doing Spiritual Battle

Matthew 4:1-11



FIG. 2

Satan Tempting Eve

Genesis 3:1-7

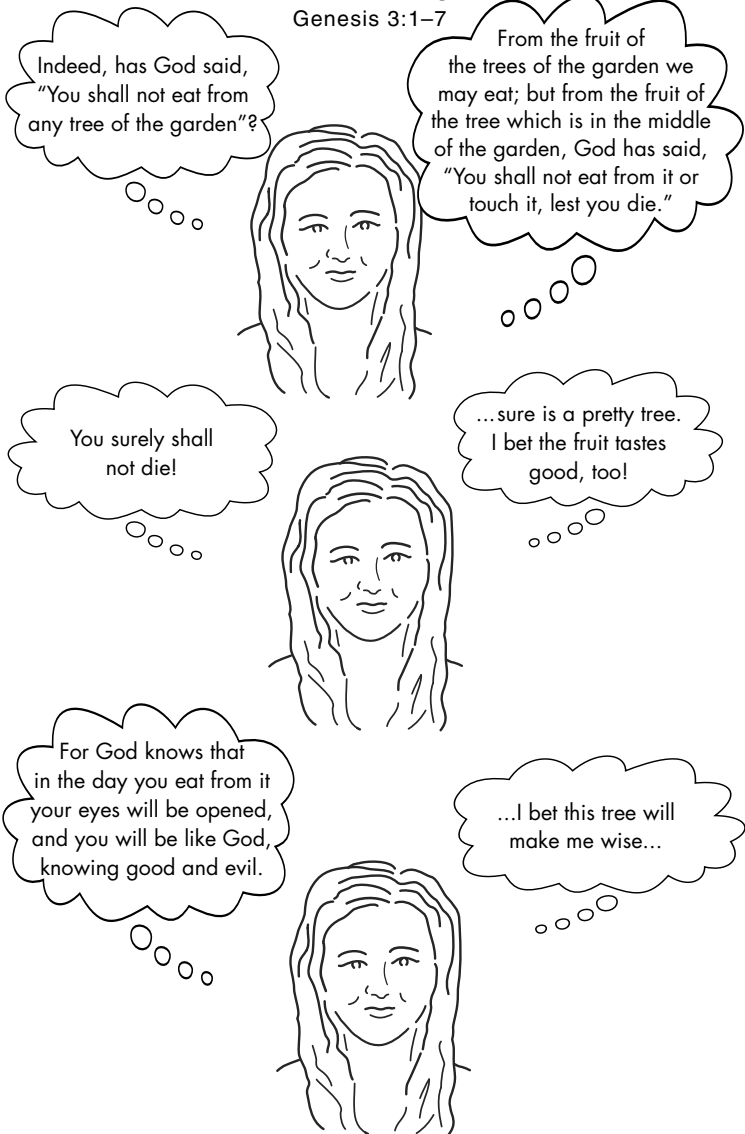


FIG. 3

Doing Spiritual Battle against Bitterness



FIG. 4

Doing Spiritual Battle against Lust



FIG. 5

Doing Spiritual Battle against Envy



FIG. 6

Doing Spiritual Battle against Pornography



FIG. 7

Possible Responses to Bitterness



FIG. 8

Possible Responses to Lust



FIG. 9

Possible Responses to Envy



FIG. 10

Possible Responses to Pornography

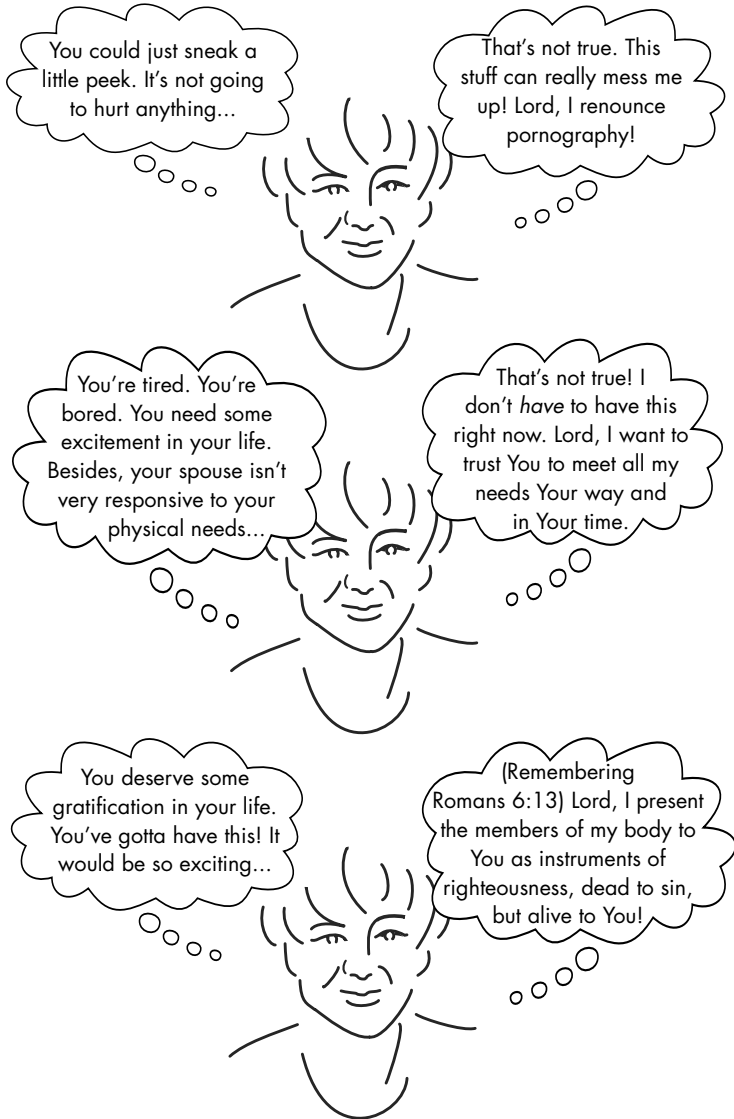
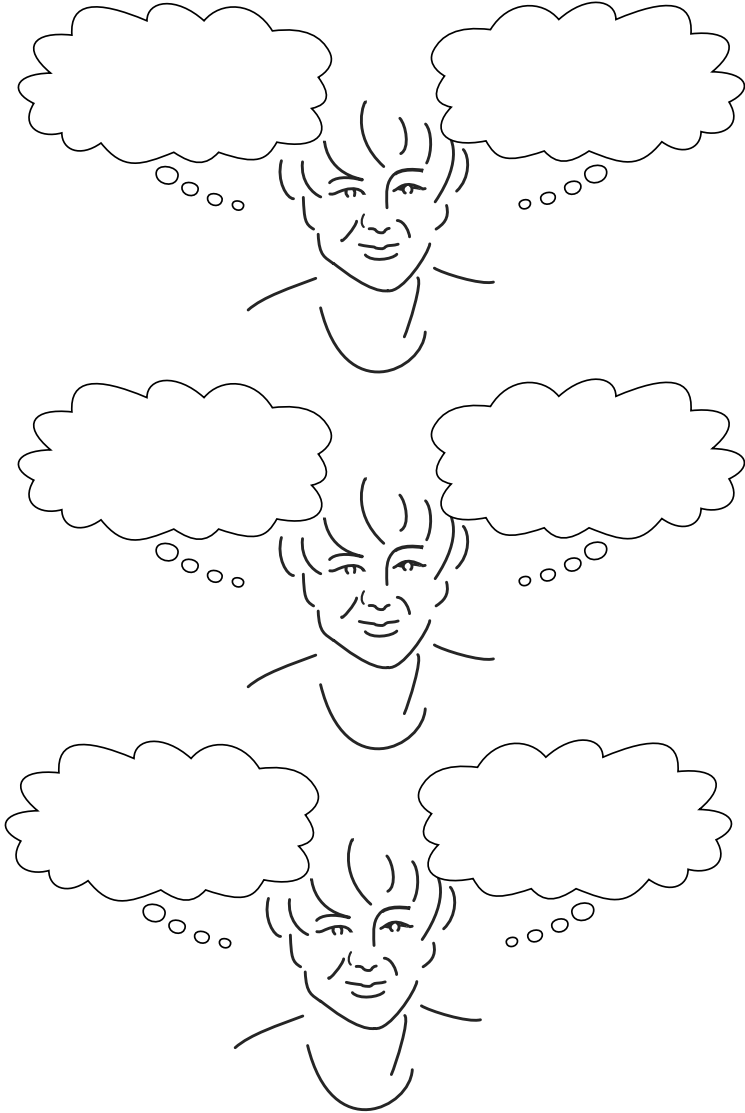


FIG. 11

Fill in the Blanks



Follow-Up Questions for Group Discussion

1. Do you agree that people with artistic temperaments are more susceptible to sin? Why or why not?
2. Is there any sin in your life that is preventing you from having a clear conscience? If so, what do you intend to do about it?
3. What prohibits people from establishing accountability in their lives?
4. Do you have accountable relationships? Have you found them helpful in your walk with the Lord? Why or why not?
5. If someone doesn't have accountability, how should they go about acquiring it?
6. What are you taking away from this chapter that can help you deal with temptation?
7. How can memorizing Scripture help in the battle with temptation?
8. What causes an artist to love the gifts more than the Giver?
9. What does this chapter present as the biggest payoff for obedience to God, and why is that important?

Questions for Group Discussion

1. Why were those quiet times Kyra spent with the Lord so significant for her?
2. If Kyra's quiet times meant so much to her, why weren't they part of her regular routine anymore?
3. How would you counsel someone like Kyra who feels disconnected from the Lord?
4. What percentage of Christians would you guess have regular devotions?
5. What, in your opinion, keeps Christians from consistently spending personal time with the Lord?
6. Do you think it's important for artists to have regular quiet times? Why or why not?
7. How might hypocrisy or duplicity manifest itself in the life of a worship leader or church artist?
8. What spiritual disciplines would you recommend artists practice regularly?

Follow-Up Questions for Group Discussion

1. Do you agree or disagree with the stereotype that portrays artists as undisciplined? Why or why not?
2. What do you think about the ministry principle presented in this chapter—that your ministry is the product of your relationship with Christ? Do you believe that's true? Why or why not?
3. What disciplines or practices enable you to nurture a vital, healthy relationship with the Lord?
4. What challenges do people face in establishing a regular quiet time, and what suggestions do you have for overcoming those challenges?
5. What practices have you found helpful when reading the Bible?
6. What practices do you find helpful for prayer?
7. Do you think journaling or using a prayer list is a good idea? Why or why not?
8. Do you have any advice for those just starting to establish a routine for private devotions?
9. Do you have any other suggestions for interjecting variety or life into your times with God?