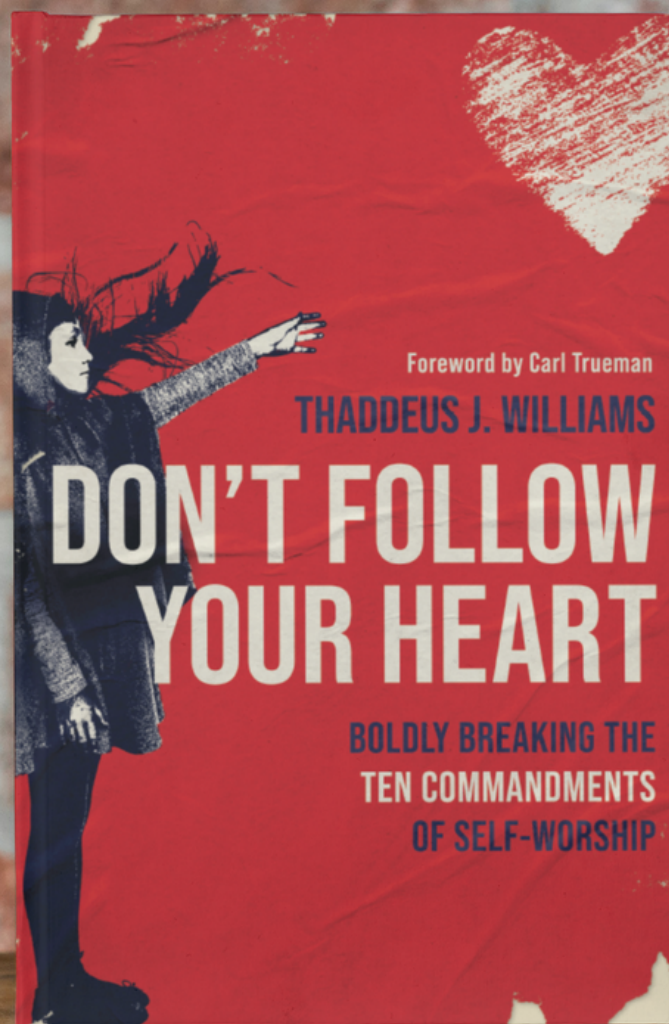


⋮ ⋮ ⋮ ⋮ ⋮

DON'T FOLLOW YOUR HEART STUDY GUIDE



CHAPTER 1: #LIVEYOURBESTLIFE

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

- Worship shapes our souls: what we worship has a profound impact on our identity and character.
- Self-worship is a paradox: While worshipping oneself may seem appealing, it leads to a diminishing sense of self. The more we focus on ourselves as the center of our own universe, the less fulfilled and authentic we become.
- Awe is essential for human flourishing: We are hardwired to experience awe. In moments of awe, we feel most alive and connected. Awe leads to positive emotions, pro-social behavior, improved cognition, and a decline in depression. Seeking awe-inspiring experiences and recognizing the awesomeness of the world around us is crucial for our well-being.
- We were made to revere Someone infinitely more interesting than ourselves: We become most truly ourselves not merely in a state of awe but in a state of awe for the ultimate Source of all that is awesome.
- Counterfeit gods distort our perception: Many gods and versions of the Christian God are created in our own image, limiting our understanding and experience of true awe and reverence. Rejecting these counterfeit deities allows us to open our minds to the possibility of a far more excellent and awe-inspiring being.

QUESTIONS:

1. How does the concept of becoming what we worship resonate with your own experiences and observations in life?
2. Do you agree with the idea that self-worship leads to a diminished sense of self and a lack of awe? Why or why not?
3. Have you ever experienced a state of awe that made you feel more alive and connected to something greater than yourself? If so, what was the source of that awe?
4. How do you feel about the distinction between the God of the Bible and the various human-created gods that may not inspire awe or reverence? Does this resonate with your own beliefs or worldview?
5. How might embracing a sense of awe and reverence for something greater than yourself enhance your life and well-being? Can you think of any specific examples or areas in your life where this could apply?



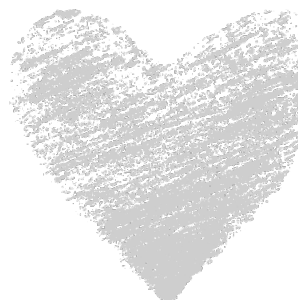
CHAPTER 2: #OKBOOMER

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

- The average American is exposed to a staggering number of advertisements daily.
- Marketing teams and media influencers often promote self-worship as innovative and forward-thinking, perpetuating the idea that traditional and conventional perspectives are outdated. However, self-worship is an ancient and regressive ideology.
- The origin story of humanity in the book of Genesis reveals that true knowledge, as understood by God, comes from creating and making. God's knowledge of good and evil is tied to His role as the ultimate creator and definer of what is good and evil.
- Self-worship promises autonomy and power, but it is a false and outdated concept. Power is not a zero-sum game, and true empowerment comes from empowering others, not from seeking self-exaltation.
- Embracing the truth of Christ's reign and the Creator-creature distinction aligns us with the future kingdom of God. Self-worship aligns us with a doomed and fading kingdom. By worshiping God and acknowledging His sovereignty, we find ourselves on the right side of the future.

QUESTIONS:

1. How do you think exposure to daily advertisements affects your perception and behavior?
2. In what ways are you influenced by the promotion of self-worship in marketing and media?
3. How does the concept of God's knowledge as tied to creating and making challenge your understanding of knowledge?
4. Have you fallen into the trap of self-worship and seeking power for yourself? How can you embrace true empowerment through empowering others?
5. Are you aligned with the future kingdom of God by worshiping Him and recognizing His sovereignty, or are you caught up in the allure of self-worship? How can you realign your focus on God?



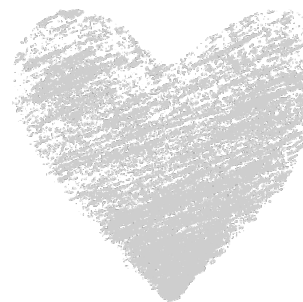
CHAPTER 3: #FOLLOWYOURHEART

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

- Our hearts are dull compared to the infinitely interesting, creative, good, wise, just, loving, powerful, and joyful heart of God. Following our own hearts limits us and confines us to our own limited perspectives.
- Our hearts are dithering and constantly changing, making them unreliable guides for our actions and decisions. What God says is true about you is infinitely more trustworthy than whatever your fallen feelings say from one moment to the next.
- Our hearts are divided, often giving us mixed messages. Different emotions and desires within us can conflict with each other, causing confusion and inner turmoil.
- Our hearts are depraved and capable of leading us astray. Following our own hearts can lead to harmful and destructive behaviors, as seen in examples like addiction, racism, and cruelty.
- Our hearts are delusional, often deceiving us and leading us astray. We have a self-serving bias that makes us view ourselves in a more positive light than we actually are.

QUESTIONS:

1. How has following your heart led you astray or caused confusion in your life?
2. What role does self-awareness play in distinguishing between genuine emotions and fleeting feelings?
3. How can you discern the difference between your own desires and God's will for your life?
4. What is the danger of relying solely on your own feelings and emotions as a basis for decision-making and identity?
5. How can you cultivate a heart that is aligned with God's heart and guided by His principles and truths?



CHAPTER 4: #BETRUE TO YOURSELF

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

- There is no worldview with absolute freedom by which you can invent your own identity and be obedient to none but yourself.
- The modern idea of being true to ourselves is almost always a matter of being true to others. Our so called true selves are shaped by the cultural forces around us.
- History shows us many examples of self-worshippers who crashed and burned because they navigated life by an inverted horizon with themselves at the top and God at the bottom.
- Seeking to be true to Jesus is far more life-giving than being true to others' selves under the guise of being true to yourself.
- Today, shunning traditional morality to create your own values is hardly risky or countercultural. It's the norm. To become a generation that soars above the herd we need to become countercultural by aligning ourselves with transcendent beauty, goodness, truth, and justice.

QUESTIONS:

1. Who or what have you felt influenced by in your life?
2. Discuss the idea of placing trust and faith in different objects or ideologies. How does the concept of relocating faith relate to the commandment to be true to oneself?
3. What is the danger of blindly following the commandment of being true to yourself?
4. What did you learn from the lives of Nero, Rousseau, Nietzsche, etc., who advocated for self-worship and radical individualism?
5. How does aligning ourselves with transcendent beauty, goodness, truth, and justice offer a more meaningful and fulfilling life? What are the challenges and rewards of living in obedience to Christ's teachings and example?



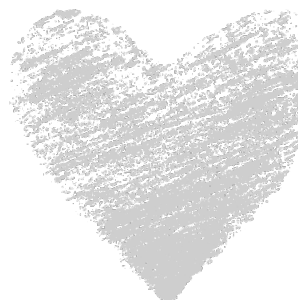
CHAPTER 5: #YOUDOYOU

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Relativists believe all patterns of life that mankind created for itself are equally valid.
- If you buy into the #youdoyou relativism of our age, you are being conned out of three essential components of your truest self—courage, credibility, and Christ.
- No one is quite the tolerant relativist they think they are. You will discover that the line has never been between moral absolutists and moral relativists; it is between moral absolutists honest about what they are and moral absolutists pretending to be what they are not.
- In the relativist's lowercase world, Jesus can't change you from depraved to saved, but only help you achieve your personal dreams, like a sappy, self help guru.
- Jesus did not come to validate and celebrate our every feeling and whim; he loves us far too much to do that.

QUESTIONS:

1. How does the concept of relativism influence your understanding of beauty, truth, love, and justice?
2. In what ways does the #youdoyou commandment undermine courage and credibility?
3. How does relativism reduce the significance of Jesus Christ as savior?
4. Have you ever avoided inviting people to Jesus because of fear of social discomfort? How can you reframe your thinking to break through this fear next time you have the opportunity?
5. Reflect on the transformative power of Christ in your life. How has he shaped your understanding of yourself, others, and the world around you?



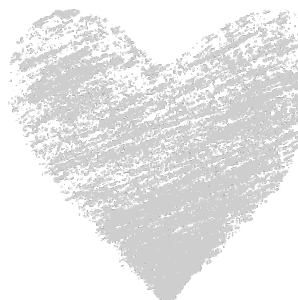
CHAPTER 6: #YOLO

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

- Self-worship sucks all true adventure out of life, because if you are the standard of your own meaning and morality, then there is nothing above you to aspire toward.
- “You only live once” captures the desire for thrilling experiences and boundary-free living, but it fails to provide long-lasting fulfillment.
- Self-worship diminishes the importance of transcendent goodness and removes the possibility of aspiring to higher virtues and meaningful goals.
- Whatever happy ending God has planned for you is better than your wildest dreams.
- Embracing the adventure offered by a Christ-centered life brings eternal significance and purpose, even in the midst of mundane tasks.

QUESTIONS:

1. In what ways does the #yolo mentality fail to provide lasting fulfillment and purpose in life?
2. Compare the concept of going "further" in self-worship with the idea of going "further up" in a Christ-centered life. How do these perspectives differ in terms of their ultimate goals and outcomes?
3. What menial tasks do you find yourself doing everyday? What extraordinary implications and eternal significance can you find behind these seemingly-meaningless tasks?
4. Discuss the concept of sacrifice in the context of the Christian adventure. How does embracing sacrificial acts and selflessness contribute to our spiritual growth and impact the lives of others?
5. How does the belief in eternity and the understanding of our everlasting nature shape our perspective on adventure and the choices we make in life? How does it contrast with the temporal and self-focused mindset of #yolo?



CHAPTER 7: #THEANSWERSAREWITHIN

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

- Cognitive distortions are internal thoughts that have destructive power over our minds.
- Cognitive behavioral therapy can help us strip distortions of their power by challenging our hearts, questioning our feelings, and replacing negative emotions with better ones.
- Moral distortions go hand-in-hand with cognitive distortions. They occur when our wills distort reality and we look within for answers instead of turning to God.
- By recognizing that there are truths higher than our hearts, we can strive to align our hearts with reality rather than distort reality to match our jumbled feelings.
- Truly fulfilled and thriving people don't look within for answers. They find their joy in God's law and meditate on it often.

QUESTIONS:

1. Which cognitive distortions are you most susceptible to? How do these distortions affect your perception of reality and your decision-making?
2. How can you stop cognitive distortions from occurring in your mind?
3. Which moral distortions have you fallen for recently?
4. Can you think of a personal experience where you were able to challenge your own negative emotions and find a more positive perspective?
5. Why is challenging our hearts and questioning our feelings a better approach than looking within ourselves for answers?



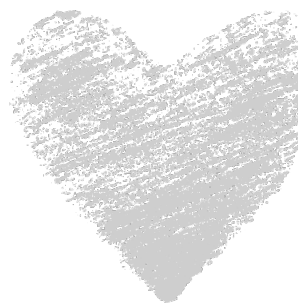
CHAPTER 8: #AUTHENTIC

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

- Today, being “authentic” means little more than tearing down any force that dares question, challenge, or reject the self’s sovereign expression of itself.
- The pursuit of authenticity without a foundation in God can lead to arrogance and the elevation of one’s own feelings as ultimate truth.
- Without an infinite reference point (God), the pursuit of authenticity can result in a purposeless existence because no finite aspect of life can provide ultimate meaning.
- Authenticity puts an unbearable weight on people, especially children. The more bombarded we are with the dogma of defining ourselves, the more depression and anxiety records we break.
- Embracing a God-authored life brings deep meaning, freedom from self-obsession, and a recognition of our created nature as image-bearers of God.

QUESTIONS:

1. What does authenticity mean to you?
2. In your own words, describe the difference between authenticity and arrogance. How can you keep a balance between embracing authenticity and recognizing the dangers of arrogance and self-centeredness?
3. Recall an instance when you tried to author your life. What happened?
4. What does it mean to be “wonderfully made”?
5. How can you invite the Holy Spirit to play a greater role in shaping your identity and guiding your actions?



CHAPTER 9: #LIVETHEDREAM

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

- The doctrines of self-worship declare that the universe must bend around our dreams and desires. But that does not happen. When we break reality's rules, reality will break us back.
- Because God exists, we are never broken beyond repair.
- The cruelty of our age is telling kids that they can create their own moral universes. This message of self-definition yields nothing but arrogance, anxiety, depression, and hell.
- When we try to #livethedream by making ourselves the standards of reality, we miss out on much of life by being preoccupied and anxious.
- Living out our true God-given telos, rather than trying to dream up our own meaning, is how we become the least alienated, most connected version of ourselves.

QUESTIONS:

1. In the context of Hollywood films like The Godfather and Scarface, how do the characters' actions reflect the theme of reality breaking back? What can we learn from these stories about the consequences of defying moral reality?
2. How do the Pinocchio problem, the Little Mermaid problem, and the Else problem illustrate the importance of recognizing and respecting moral reality?
3. What are the dangers of promoting boundless self-expression? How does it affect society and individuals?
4. Have you ever experienced any negative consequences from pursuing your own dreams without considering the moral structure of reality?
5. How can we strike a balance between pursuing our dreams and recognizing the limits of our control?



CHAPTER 10: #LOVEISLOVE

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

- Usually, the best way to spot real bigots, haters, or phobics is to find those running around calling everyone else bigots, haters, or phobics.
- Two are better than one: Relationship, connection, and intimacy are at the core of who we were made to be.
- The self-worshiper defines love as accepting all human feelings as unfallen and unquestionable. Society has mistaken apathy and a polite, unquestioning acceptance for true love.
- The reality is, you can truly love someone and still disagree with them.
- Self-worship not only robs us of awe, originality, freedom, authenticity, humility, courage, and adventure; it also strips us of the joyous capacity to give and receive a love that is truly redemptive, like God's love.

QUESTIONS:

1. What does love mean to you?
2. What role do words play in shaping civilizations? How has the meaning of the word "love" changed and what are implications of this change?
3. What is an Unthought? How does this concept affect our ability to disagree and have meaningful relationships?
4. Can there be a balance between acceptance and critical thinking?
5. How can we love each other well?

