

RESTORATION ROAD

The Master Key to a New and Satisfied Life of Authenticity

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with **DEREK WILLIAMS**



*“Stone is heavy and sand a burden, but provocation
by a fool is heavier than both.” Proverbs 27:3*

Restoration Road: The Master Key to a New and Satisfied Life of Authenticity Study Guide

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INTRODUCTION



As we travel this side of life, none of us arrives anywhere by accident. We choose, think, pray, and feel our way down a road of desires and intentional acts that bring us to our destination. We program our internal GPS to guide us to one of two places: destruction or restoration. Too often, we follow a green line as we listen to the guiding voice that directs our every turn without realizing that the line and the voice are purely a result of our self-programmed destination.

On our earthly journey, we enter through one of two gates, travel one of two roads, and arrive at one of two destinations. Our excursion begins at a gate that is either locked or unlocked. The locked gate leads us to Desperation Road that winds to the destination of self-destruction. The unlocked gate opens to Restoration Road that leads to the destination of life.

Which direction are you headed?

Will you allow the Restorer to unlock the gate of your heart to travel Restoration Road, as you discover the life that the He programs into your GPS? If you are stuck behind a locked gate, tired of the bumpiness of Desperation Road, feeling like your life is self-destructing, then

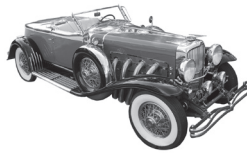
join us on a journey to unlock, transform, and restore your heart, desires, and three resources of life to their original design.

Take this journey with us, and be prepared for your GPS to be reprogrammed as you begin your journey on the green line down Restoration Road, learning to listen to the Restorer's voice that navigates you to the destination you were designed to find.

I'm glad you have decided to join us on Restoration Road.

Mitch

HOW TO USE THIS STUDY GUIDE



Welcome

If you are joining a group to go through this study guide together, you may wish to plan to eat a meal together before or after the session. Use this time to connect with one another and prepare your hearts for what is ahead, or to discuss what you've just heard.

Video Message

Each week Mitch will share a short message from his own life that will connect with the topic of the week. He will offer signposts to guide you along your journey and prepare you for the session ahead.

Processing

Each member of the group should alternate leading the others through the study guide and pause at the *Navigating Restoration Road* sections. Take the time to answer these questions and share the findings with the group. Once everyone has shared, move on to the next section.

Closing Prayer

Allow time at the end of your meeting to pray. This is a great way to apply what you are learning, establish a restored focus for the week ahead, and strengthen relationships within the group.

Before the Next Session

Read Chapter 1, *Sand, Stone, and Clay*, in the *Restoration Road* book. Note: You will need to read each assigned chapter(s) the week prior to meeting.

CHAPTER ONE: SAND, STONE, AND CLAY



Before you begin, be sure that you have read Chapter One, “Sand, Stone, and Clay” from Restoration Road.

(Play Video: *Introduction & Sand, Stone, and Clay*)

Introduction

Whether we are CEO’s, blue-collar workers, stay-at-home moms or dads, college graduates, or freshmen in high school, we all have old patterns in our lives that we would like restored to new. The challenge we face is answering the question, “How do we restore what’s old in our lives to true authenticity?”

Authenticity means reflecting the design of the designer.

Authenticity, the number one value in our postmodern culture, aligns our lives from the inside out.

Pretense, the opposite of authenticity, misaligns our lives from the outside in.

A life of pretense keeps us unrestored; therefore, a life of authenticity is impossible without restoration.

Restored means “to be made new again.”

The old is surrendered. Like a classic car that needs restoration, each one of us must surrender his old basket- case of a life to the Restorer.

The pieces are surrendered. The Restorer begins to disassemble and renovate the components of our lives, piece by piece, whether they are unrestored or self-restored.

The new is surrendered. As the restoration process unfolds, we learn that we are designed to bring authentic restoration to others. We surrender the new for this purpose and continue to surrender any old parts that corrode again over time.

Navigating Restoration Road

- Is there an area in your life where you are pretending from the outside in?

■ What are the consequences of maintaining this perspective?

■ Are you prepared to surrender your old life to the Restorer?

Pride is the lock on the human heart.

Humility is the key.

In order to be restored to authenticity, we must fully surrender our hearts, desires, and lives to the Restorer.

Jesus said to His disciple Peter, “I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven” (Matthew 16:19).

The keys that Jesus was talking about are, most likely, the full surrender of our hearts, desires, and three resources of life (our time, talent and treasure) to Christ, the one true Restorer. The kingdom of heaven is God’s divine reign, rule, and order in the hearts and lives of people on this earth, both now and in the future. It is the unique expression of Christ in us. When we fully surrender our key into the lock of the human heart, our gate to the kingdom of heaven opens wide. When we partially surrender our key with a prideful heart, our gate to the kingdom of heaven remains locked, both in this life and the next.

Pride is a hard heart, one that makes itself higher than others.

We find it in two forms: *sand or stone.*

- A *sand* heart partially surrenders the horizontal (our relationship with others) at the expense of the vertical (our relationship with God). This is license. It focuses on people and tasks rather than God. A sand heart is loose. It requires a storm to be shaped and restored.
- A *stone* heart partially surrenders the vertical at the expense of the horizontal. This is legalism—the thought that one can manipulate the deity of the universe. It focuses on God rather than others. A stone heart is hard. It requires a severe tool to be shaped and restored.

Navigating Restoration Road

■ Does either sand or stone characterize the condition of your heart?

■ If so, why?

■ How has this affected your relationship with God and your relationships with others?

The Master Key that allows us to fully surrender our hearts, desires, and lives to the Restorer is cross-shaped; it represents the perfect picture of the vertical intersecting with the horizontal. In order to fully surrender the Master Key into the lock of pride on the human heart, one must

humble his heart vertically to God, and horizontally to others.

A *clay* heart lives in the sweet spot where the vertical intersects with the horizontal—where our relationship with God intersects with our relationships with others.

A clay heart is a *humble* heart.

“Humility” and “humanity” come from the same Latin word, *humus*, which means “from the ground.”

Humility is bending the knees of our hearts. It means “to make ourselves lower than.”

Consequently, humility always has an object.

Whereas sand is a picture of license, and stone is a picture of legalism, clay is a picture of *love*. A clay heart is malleable in the hands of its gracious Designer.

CLAY is an acronym that helps us remember how to live with a humble heart. First, we *confess* to God our proud sinful hearts of sand or stone. Second, we *learn* His design for our lives from the Bible. Third, we *apply* what we learn from the Scriptures to our daily tasks and relationships. Fourth, we *yield* the outcomes to God. A clay heart experiences the design of the Designer through full surrender.

The heart of the Designer is a heart of clay. He desires to restore all that He has designed. As the Restorer, He is the embodiment of a clay heart—the vertical intersecting with the horizontal. He walked the earth as fully God and fully man. He is the authentic picture of a humble heart that fully surrenders all in communion to the Father and at the same time humbly surrenders all in community with others. He has restored the vertical (God with man), and the horizontal (man with man). He invites each of us to be restored to authenticity, the unique expression of the Designer in us.

Navigating Restoration Road

- Describe a person you have met who exhibits a heart of clay.
- What attributes of that person communicate humility?

Sand and stone hearts sign up for *self-restoration* which takes place from the *outside in*.

We think that if we *go* somewhere, we can *do* something, and then we will *be* somebody.

Navigating Restoration Road

- Where have you traveled in order to do something that you thought would make you somebody?
- How did that journey affect your life?

Living restored to authenticity occurs from the *inside out*. This is the *be, do, go* of full surrender. Who we are designed to *be* determines what we are designed to *do* which determines where we are designed to *go*. This is the design of the Designer. Consequently, Restoration Road

transforms our hearts, then our desires, and finally our three resources of life—our time, talent, and treasure.

First, *Restoration Road transforms our hearts, the identity of who we are designed to be.*

Four Chambers of the Spiritual Heart can be remembered using the acronym WISE:

Will, Intellect, Spirit, Emotions

Navigating Restoration Road

- Describe how your choices, thoughts, prayers, and feelings have led to your current place in life.

Second, *Restoration Road transforms our desires, or what we are designed to do.*

Whereas sand hearts see desires for their *gratification*, stone hearts see desires often in terms of *negation*. But clay hearts see desires for their *transformation*. The latter is what we were designed to *do* with our desires.

The Four Primary Desires are Significance, Contentment, Control, and Security

Sin's Trifecta is a result of pursuing the satisfaction of our desires apart from God.

Adam and Eve were (1) *ashamed* because they had been *swayed* (Genesis 3:7), (2) they *hid* because they were *afraid* (Genesis 3:12-13), and (3) they *blamed* because they had *disobeyed* (Genesis 3:12-13).

We take God's gift of life and continually attempt to satisfy our desires by being god in our own self-made kingdoms.

Navigating Restoration Road

- Describe a time in your life when you attempted to either gratify or negate your desires.

- What was the outcome?

Third, *Restoration Road transforms our three resources of life, or where we are designed to go.*

- *Time* is fully surrendered to the Restorer, and our calendars are transformed.
- *Talent* is fully surrendered to the Restorer, and our business cards are transformed.
- *Treasure* is fully surrendered to the Restorer, and our investments are transformed.

Navigating Restoration Road

- What kinds of appointments predominantly fill your calendar: career, social, or family?

■ If you could add to or subtract from your calendar, what would it be?

■ What title is on your business card?
(If you do not have a business card, what would it say if you did?)

■ How does that title affect others who see it?

■ What is the general condition of your check-book: balanced or overdrawn?

■ How does this affect the pace of your life?

Money is pride's measurement of our giftedness (time, talent, and treasure).

Wisdom is humility's measurement of our godliness (Christ in us).

Wisdom is the intersection of the vertical with the horizontal. It is God's heart (vertical) combined with street smarts (horizontal).

Wisdom applies one's relationship with God to one's relationships with others, including the tasks to be achieved.

We were designed to have a *heart* for wisdom.

"Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight" (Proverbs 3:5-6).

"Pay attention and listen to the sayings of the wise; apply your heart to what I teach, for it is pleasing when you keep them in your heart and have all of them ready on your lips" (Proverbs 22:17-18).

Wisdom begins with a humble clay heart toward God.

"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and discipline" (Proverbs 1:7).

"When pride comes, then comes disgrace, but with humility comes wisdom" (Proverbs 11:2).

"Humility and the fear of the LORD bring wealth and honor and life" (Proverbs 22:4).

We were designed to *desire* wisdom.

"She is more precious than rubies; nothing you desire can compare with her" (Proverbs 3:15).

We were designed to pursue wisdom with our *three resources of life*.

"Wisdom is supreme; therefore get wisdom. Though it cost all you have, get understanding" (Proverbs 4:7).

The ultimate word to describe God is wisdom.

Christ the Restorer is the wisdom of God.

“But to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God” (1 Corinthians 1:24).

Christ is the *authenticity of God.*

“The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven” (Hebrews 1:3).

He is humble in heart.

“Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls” (Matthew 11:29).

Humility toward Him is the beginning of His wisdom in our lives.

“The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding” (Proverbs 9:10).

Foolishness is the opposite of wisdom.

In our pride, we *foolishly pretend* that the satisfaction of our *desires* will occur through the pursuit of more *time, talent, and treasure* apart from God, typically measured in the form of *money*. The result is a life of *pride, pretense, and foolishness* that leaves us *unrestored and dissatisfied*.

Navigating Restoration Road

- Describe a time in your life when you made foolish choices, pondered foolish thoughts, offered foolish prayers or wrestled with foolish feelings.

- Did it leave you satisfied or dissatisfied?

- Looking back, how would wise choices, wise thoughts, wise prayers, and wise feelings have affected the outcome?

The Restorer unlocks our freedom of restoration. He unlocks the gates of our hearts with His Master Key of full surrender, or humility, that only comes in the form of a clay heart.

When we humble our hearts in clay, we travel Restoration Road, where the vertical intersects with the horizontal in full surrender. Our destination is a satisfied life full of wisdom that is restored to authenticity.

Clay hearts humble all four chambers of their hearts, all four desires, and all three resources of life in order to be restored to authenticity.

Whereas sand hearts desire relationships without rules and stone hearts desire rules without relationships, clay hearts desire relationships with wise rules that offer connections from the inside out: be-do-go.

Navigating Restoration Road

- What brick wall needs to be torn down in order for you to travel Restoration Road?

- Will you allow the Restorer to unlock the chambers of your heart, desires, and three resources of life?

Conclusion

Every sale, relationship, task, and decision in your life will come down to this: unlocking the door to a restored life with the Master Key that guides your journey. Doing so helps you choose between humility and pride, authenticity and pretense, and wisdom and foolishness as you travel Restoration Road with a heart of clay toward a life that is priceless.

Assignment

Read *Restoration Road* Chapter Two, *Something of Value is Lost*.