

2: Cling to faith

worship Spend a moment or two in quietness before you begin

God, you search me and know me. Before I sit, you know when I will rise.

God, you search me and know me. Before I speak, you know what I will say.

You search me and know me, in my joy and despair, in my breathing in and breathing out.

You search me and know me. Your knowledge is too deep to reach, too vast to comprehend.

God, you search me and know me.

Search me, O God, and know my heart.

Paul continues to encourage young Timothy to keep going - fight the fight! This study helps us to identify some of the pressures in our lives and encourages us to cling to faith!

read it 1 Timothy 1.18-20

Summarise this short section in your own words. **What is the nugget that seems particularly relevant to you?**

Paul likens the life of faith as "fighting the Lord's battles." **Is that your experience? In what ways (try to be specific)?**

There is a constant theme in this letter about 'conscience'. Here, Paul says 'cling to faith and keep your conscience clear.' **How do we keep our conscience clear?**

Cracks in the soul

Consider this quote and spend some time considering the 'cracks in your soul'. It is a deeply personal (and possibly painful) process, but a vital one to our Christian growth. **Take your time and be honest** with the group about some of the pressures you face.

Resist the temptation of giving those in your group advice, just listen, identify with and appreciate each others' vulnerability.

Many people don't practise an examination of conscience. Instead, they live on autopilot with no self-reflection. That's why they default to the same sins over and over again. But the real challenge ... is to go deeper and ask yourself why you commit those sins. That's when you'll discover what I call cracks in the soul. There's usually one, two, or three of them in each of us. The vast majority of your sins are symptoms of those cracks—sins are often neon arrows pointing to your fundamental weakness, your deficiency, the broken place in the soul. Pondering your sins can lead you to their source. Knowing that crack will give you an added awareness that can be helpful in resisting its sins. Albert Haase OFM

Use some of these questions to navigate the conversation but don't be afraid of silences:

- Can you identify the "one, two or three" cracks in your soul?
- Are there any common themes as you share which encourage you that we're all in this together?
- What might the Spirit be saying to you about how you cling to faith in the light of what you have been thinking about?

Finish by listening to this song <https://tinyurl.com/soulrests>

