

**(SLIDE 1) AHA Week 1: Setting the Stage
for the AHA Moments in Life**

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Welcome Back! (Welcome Students Back)

(SLIDE 2) Have you ever had a lightbulb moment?

Like a moment when you are doing something and in the middle of it you realize where you are at and what you are doing, and your like, "What am I doing?"

I have had moments like that probably my entire life. I remember one of those moments. For some reason they happen to me frequently but one that sticks out to me was when I was probably 13.

We had a sewage treatment plant by our house that had a huge, barbed wire fence around it. One week there was a huge excavator tractor that had parked on the outside of the fence and put its bucket on the other side of the fence.

(SLIDE 3) Now, I had always been a sucker for the "I Dare you" Anyone else fallen prey to a Dare in your life before? I had this friend who lived on my block and we were always daring each other to do stupid things. Josh

Josh dared me to climb up the tractor and climb the arm of the tractor to the other side of the fence. I was pretty confident at this point in my life and felt pretty sure I could do it.

What I had not thought through was, they use a lot of grease to keep the tractor operating the right way. And as I was climbing over it, I looked down and saw that

barbered wire fence under me. As I was reaching up to make the next grab, it was like slow mo, my hand went to the arm of the tractor, I saw the grease, and at that moment I had an AHA moment.

Why in the world did I let Josh talk me into this?!

(SLIDE 4) My hand slipped, and luckily, I had a good grip with my other hand, but my body dangled straight down, and I caught the entire barbered wire fence to the chest and stomach. (Seriously, I still have the scar today!)

(SLIDE 5) I have had several AHA moments in my life where I realized where I was probably wasn't the best place for me and I bet you have too.

But what should these moments teach us in life? AHA's? Sometimes they can teach us some valuable lessons about God too.

Over the next few weeks, we are going to talk about the AHA! Moments in life, because if you are like me, even though I should have figured it out at that moment, I didn't.

In fact, even today I have AHA moments as I get closer to God.

So, as we begin this journey to AHA, I want you to examine your lives for some of these moments over the next few weeks and ask yourself, is God trying to get my attention?

(SLIDE 6) Did you know, there are over 45,000 self-help books in print as of 2013?

From Financial books, to weight loss books, Relationship books, there is a self-help book for anything and everything.

Anybody ever read a Self-Help Book before?

(SLIDE 7) When we look at the title AHA and talk about the discovery of those moments in our lives, we have to understand these moments were not designed as a “Self-Help” scenario.

In fact, they were designed to get our attention. Designed to get us to a place where we find that denying our self, or our fleshly response is exactly where God is taking us in these moments.

(SLIDE 8) The word we are looking at over the next few weeks is the word, AHA. Kyle Idleman, the author of the book AHA! Defines the word like this, “When something is suddenly seen, found, or understood.”

(SLIDE 9) He goes on to explain its spiritual definition as, “a sudden spiritual understanding, recognition, or resolution that brings about lasting transformation.”

(SLIDE 10) Wow, what does that mean...simple... a moment where you are lost, the light bulb goes on, and you realize you need to do something...

An AHA Moment. It’s a spiritual moment in your life where you wake up. You move out of the FOG, what happens in FOG? It’s hard to navigate isn’t it?

Think about this, at your age most of you reside in the FOG of life. Especially right now with COVID and trying to steer clear of being quarantined.

It’s a difficult world, with difficult circumstances, but I wonder how many of those circumstances that affect us are caused by us?

(SLIDE 11) I was reading about a young lady the other day that was trying to cope with impulse eating. When stress came, she found herself eating more and more.

She tried every diet fad, self help book, eating plan, yet she reached an alarm in 325 pounds and her weight gain felt unstoppable.

Finally, after months and months of cycling through depression and one let down after the other, she had an AHA moment and realized, Food was never going to fill the emptiness that was inside of her heart.

She had been trying to satisfy her soul by feeding her stomach.

She decided to attend a local church, and the night she went the speaker was talking about John 6 where it describes Jesus as the Bread of Life.

It was in that moment where she decided that instead of turning to food for comfort, she needed to turn to Jesus to fill her in ways the food could never.

That was about 4-5 years ago, and 170 pounds! Transformation in the spiritual, led to transformation in the physical all because she opened up and had an AHA! Moment.

(SLIDE 12) C’mon, what are some areas in our lives that we need these moments to happen?

Maybe you are cutting? Eating or Not Eating because you are depressed?
Looking at Pornography to the point your addicted?

The Aha moment that can happen can set you free! Jesus can fill the gaping holes that the enemy has left behind in your hearts.

I once heard that Sin would take you further than you ever wanted to go, and leave you stranded and in need of rescue.

Some of us live in our sins, bad habits, or places of escape because we don't realize the amazing opportunity a relationship with Jesus can bring us!

(SLIDES 13-16) There are 3 essential ingredients to an AHA moment and I want to share them with you really quick.

1. A Sudden Awakening
2. Brutal Honesty
3. Immediate Action

Over the next few weeks, we are going to look at each of these ingredients in detail but tonight I just want to give an overview because I believe God is wanting to hook you up with an AHA moment for yourself.

As we look at these ingredients you need to know, that they all go hand in hand, one will only bring you so far, unless you experience and apply all three it will never get you to where you want to go.

For instance, if there is an awakening and honesty, but no action, then you'll never hit your AHA moment.

(SLIDE 18) It's only when Gods word and the Holy Spirit bring these three ingredients

together in your life will you see what the AHA is all about.

1. A Sudden Awakening
2. Brutal Honesty
3. Immediate Action

(SLIDE 19) I want to share with you briefly a parable or a story from the Bible where Jesus was talking to a bunch of religious people and bystanders.

It's probably one of the most famous parables Jesus ever told, it's called the Prodigal Son and it's found in Luke.

Jesus is talking about a young man, who was from a wealthy background that got tired of where he lived. Tired of living under his father's covering and he wanted out.

One day he approached his dad and demanded his inheritance so he could leave and live life the way he wanted to live.

Sadly, his father did as he was asked, and the young man went to a distant land and jumped into the party scene.

(SLIDE 20) Now I want to stop here really quick because I want you to understand that when Jesus used the word phrase, distant land, people knew what he meant, Gentile Land. A place despised by the Jewish people. Gentiles were known as unclean.

So, what did this mean, he wasn't just walking away from his dad, but he was turning his back and walking away from his faith.

Pretty soon he was in a place where he had wasted all of his money on wild living. Partying, Girls, all kinds of stuff.

It got so bad for this young man that after all his friends left him after the money ran out, he had to settle with working in the pig pen feeding pigs.

He got so desperate for food in fact he actually ate from the pig's food trough.

(SLIDE 21) Here is what I know to be true tonight, many of you have been in a similar place and found yourself in a distant land.

Can I tell you, every AHA story has a distant land component to it? A time where we leave God, the father, to go on our own journey because we think we could do it better than he can, or we leave because we don't like the accountability because we feel like church is just a bunch of rules.

So we turn and run to the distant land. Because for a season it may feel comfortable. May feel right.

I am sure the young man felt that at first. I am sure the parties, the feeling of acceptance by the girls, and all the stuff made him feel special, yet when it was all gone, and everyone had gone home, here he is lonely. Empty. In a pig pen. The low of the lowest.

(SLIDE 22) What caused him to run? You see what caused this young man to run, maybe causing you to run from God.

What is it?

(SLIDE 23) Maybe the young man saw his father as "The Unreasonable Father."

Maybe he thought he was missing out on the experiences of life. Maybe he saw his father as a guy with a long list of rules that nobody could match up to.

Maybe the young man saw his father as, "The Unpleasable Father".

Maybe he felt his father's standards were so high he couldn't meet them, and it was easier just to give up.

How about the "Unmerciful Father", or possibly the "Uncaring Father".

(SLIDE 24) Sadly, there are a lot of you in the room that hear those types of fathers and you may hear your father's description in there.

And because we are to relate God as the father, we get our signals crossed, and see God as Unreasonable, Unpleasable, Unmerciful, or even Uncaring.

Maybe you see a relationship with God as a set of unobtainable rules, or you have to be perfect little church girl, or guy.

Maybe you tried once and prayed for something to happen and it didn't happen the way you wanted it to happen, so you saw God as uncaring.

Whatever the case maybe you find yourself tonight wandering in a distant land.

(SLIDE 25) You are lonely, abused, hurt, maybe you feel abandoned, and the one thing you need to hear tonight is that God is a "LOVING FATHER".

That's right, He loves you despite of you.

He has an AHA moment lined up for you ready for the taking and he is extending his hand to you asking you to take it and follow him to AHA.

(SLIDE 26) Where are you at tonight? Are you trapped in a distant land? Do you find yourself struggling to find purpose?

Maybe it's time for you to have an AHA moment and see how amazing God is!

(SLIDE 27) Let's Pray...