

Preparing for LifeGroup

1. Prepare for each LifeGroup session by praying for:
 - A. Each group member
 - B. That God would make His Word (the Bible) clear to people in the group.
 - C. That God will help you as you lead
2. Personally prepare for the LifeGroup Discussion by:
 - A. Reading through this LifeGuide and becoming familiar with the content.
 - B. Make sure you take time to read and study the Scripture that is used in this LifeGuide.
3. Create a positive LifeGroup Environment by:
 - A. Serving Food! (Snacks or a meal – rotate who provides) - *optional
 - B. Arranging the seating where everyone can see everyone's face
 - C. Setting the room temperature @ 69 degrees (cold keeps them awake)
 - D. Placing pets in another room
 - E. Supervising and placing children in a remote room
 - F. Keeping room bright with natural and artificial lighting
 - G. Having light/fun music playing (low to medium sound volume)
 - H. Having pens available
 - I. Keeping extra Bibles on hand
 - J. Making sure everyone knows each other
 - K. Making sure you don't go too long. (Try aiming for 30 minutes of fellowship at the beginning and 1 hour of group time.)

Now you are ready for group time!

LifeGuide for *WORDPOWER* – Hope not Hurt

Ice Breakers

Use one or more of the following “Ice Breakers” to get them talking:

- A. *Who is your favorite comedian?*
- B. *What all do you carry in your wallet and what does that tell us about your personality?*
- C. *How can you be a better neighbor in your neighborhood?*

Leader Tips:

Remember that the purpose of the ice breakers is to get everyone involved and ready to talk. Try to make this a natural transition into your Bible study time.

Setting the Stage

Leaders: The purpose of “setting the stage” is to effectively transition from the icebreakers to a discussion of the current weekend message. This section reminds everyone in your group of the overall theme and purpose of the sermon series, and gets their minds prepared for the subject matter.

Words are powerful. Words can be poisonous, and they can also be positive! Your relationships hinge on using words wisely to help others instead of hurting them. Join Pastor Micah as he unpacks five of the most important words everyone needs to hear.

During this message series, we will be studying through Proverbs. There are a couple of ways that you can challenge your group members during this study.

1. There are 31 chapters in the book of Proverbs, which means one chapter for every day of the month. Challenge your group members to read one chapter of Proverbs each day for the next month.
2. Micah has challenged the church to memorize **Prov. 18:21** using *The Message* paraphrase. Challenge your group to memorize this verse.

Words kill, words give life; they're either poison or fruit – you choose.

Discussion Time

Leaders: Let me take a moment to make you aware of the content found in each LifeGuide, and how you can use it. Remember this is a “guide” so you should not feel compelled to read every word and follow it in perfect order. Basically, I want this guide to provide you Scripture that you can read and study together, explanation and commentary, and discussion questions to get the group talking. The questions are bulleted so that you can locate them easily. The guide does provide you with a general flow for the evening, but you are free to adapt the guide to the needs of your group. You are always welcome to call or email me if you have any questions. Please don’t feel like you are bothering me. It’s my pleasure and my job to help you.

How many of you like to play Scrabble? Micah is using a scrabble theme to help us remember his messages each week during the WORDPOWER series. Below is a copy of the sermon notes, so you can review with your group and then discuss the questions related to the message.

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WORD BANK

Reckless words pierce like a sword, but the tongue of the wise brings healing.
(Proverbs 12:18)

The lips of the righteous know what is fitting, but the mouth of the wicked only what is perverse. (Proverbs 10:32)

Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers, this should not be. Can both fresh water and salt water flow from the same spring?
(James 3:10-11)

A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.
(Proverbs 15:1)

Pleasant words are a honeycomb, sweet to the soul and healing to the bones.
(Proverbs 16:24)

The mouth of the righteous is a fountain of life. (Proverbs 10:11)

Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. (Ephesians 4:29)

Leaders: Remind the group of their challenge to read through the book of Proverbs. Take some time at the beginning of your discussion to see what people have learned from reading Proverbs.

- What proverbs have you found most helpful this last week?
- What questions do you have from Proverbs?
- What wisdom have you gained from reading Proverbs the last few weeks?

Have someone in your group read Proverbs 12:18.

Explanation: Some people just always seem to be bitter and frustrated when they talk. Their speech is filled with manipulation, mocking, insults, and condemning words. Those “rash words” feel like “sword thrusts.” The wisdom of Proverbs teaches the opposite that a wise tongue brings healing into people’s lives.

- Have you listened to the new breed of comedians in today’s culture? How would you characterize their comedy material?
- Why do so many in our culture think they are so funny?
- Why do we sometimes find ourselves laughing at speech that is vulgar and offensive?
- Do you think our listening to this comedy on TV, radio, and movies affects the way we talk to people around us? How?

Have someone read Luke 12:1-3.

- What do you think Jesus meant by “the leaven of the Pharisees”?
- What do you know about the Pharisees words? Were they uplifting with their words? How did they talk about Gentiles? How did they talk about Jesus?
- How does vs. 3 challenge us to choose our words wisely when talking with others?
- Have you ever said something hurtful about someone, and they somehow found out? What happened to that relationship?
- Why do we struggle to speak to each other face-to-face in those circumstances?
- Can you think of someone you need to call or email tonight, and apologize for something hurtful that you said?
- If you are accustomed to speaking a certain way with your friends that you know is not glorifying to God, how can you begin to change the way you speak?
- How can you better anticipate conversations that will take place, and be proactive about infusing your speech with hope instead of hurt?
- How does daily Bible reading help you speak well throughout the day?
- How can you remind yourself throughout the day to think about the words you have spoken as a way of checking to see if you have offered hope or hurt with your words?

Wrap Up

Sum up the lesson by re-capping the main point and challenge the group to apply the truth to their life this week.

1. Ask for praise reports from previous prayer requests
2. Ask for prayer requests
3. Ask each person (or couple) to volunteer for part of next week's meal/snack.
4. Make any announcements
5. Close with prayer and praise

☺ Let me know if you have any questions.

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