

# 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 Crazy Love – Can God use me?

## Ice Breakers

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

- A. *What is the craziest thing that has happened this summer?*
- B. *What is the craziest thing your parents say that you find yourself saying?*
- C. *What is the craziest job you have ever worked?*

### **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.

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## 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.

Does something deep inside you long to break free from the status quo? The answer is not a longer list of do’s and don’ts. God’s crazy, relentless, all-powerful love calls us to a passionate, life-changing relationship with Him. What would happen if we loved God as much as He loved us? Come and see how radical love can be.

If we are going to talk about crazy love, we need to define what crazy looks like. Like everything else at Real Life, we find our definitions from the Scriptures. If we want to see what crazy love looks like, we need to search the Scriptures for examples of crazy love in action. The Bible is full of stories about men and women whom God loved passionately, and in return they loved Him and others with a relentless, crazy love.

As we search the Scriptures for these stories of crazy love, we are indebted to the author of Hebrews for summarizing some of these stories in chapter 11. In this amazing chapter about faith, we find a plethora of examples of great faith or crazy love that has been demonstrated over the centuries. We are thankful

that God has provided us with such great examples and instruction so we can possess a crazy love that brings Him the glory that He so richly deserves. If you will open your hearts and minds and be obedient to the truths of Scripture, you can also develop this crazy love that comes only from the power of Christ.

## Background and Context

Hebrews:

**Author** – The author of Hebrews never clearly identifies himself. Some have attributed the book to Barnabas or Paul while others believe it was more likely written by Luke or Apollos. Most scholars today concede that the author remains anonymous.

**Audience** – The assumption based on the title and internal evidence is that this letter was intended for mainly Jewish Christians.

**Theme** – The Supremacy of Christ

**Purpose** – Hebrews is best understood as a sermon letter meant to be read as a single sermon.

## 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.

Have someone or several people in your group read Hebrews 11 – 12:1-2.

- What are some ways that you have lived out crazy love this last week?
- Why is it good to continue to read the same Scripture passages again and again?
- What is something new you have learned from Hebrews 11 over the last week?

Remind your group of how we are defining crazy for this sermon series. Crazy love does not mean foolish love. You can be intensely involved, excited, outrageous, and all in without being foolish and careless. We want to challenge each other to live out a crazy love that is under the sovereign control of our amazing God.

Crazy - intensely involved, excited, outrageous, all in.

## 1. Get rid of my excuses.

Noah - I got drunk.                      Moses - I murdered somebody.  
Abraham - I was too old. Rahab - I was trapped in sexual sin.  
Abraham - I lied.                      Gideon - I was a coward.  
Jacob - I deceived people.              David - I committed adultery.  
Joseph - I had a tough life.              ----- -

*Elijah was a man just like us. (James 5:17)*

- What are some of the excuses that people use to convince themselves that God can't use them?
- What are some of the excuses that you have used in the past?
- How does your view of these Biblical people change knowing they are flawed human beings?
- When you are out of excuses, what is it time to do?
- Why are we so quick to disqualify people from ministry if they make some major sinful mistake?
- How can we better practice restoration when people do make mistakes?

## 2. Embrace crazy as the normal Christian life.

*Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith.*  
(Hebrews 12:2a)

*Then Jesus said to them all: "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. (Luke 9:23)*

*I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other! So, because you are lukewarm—neither hot nor cold—I am about to spit you out of my mouth. You say, 'I am rich; I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing.' But you do not realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked. (Revelation 3:15-17)*

*A thief is only there to steal and kill and destroy. I came so they can have real and eternal life, more and better life than they ever dreamed of. (John 10:10MSG)*

- What do you think it means to deny yourself? What does that look like?
- What does it mean to take up your cross daily?
- At what point does crazy become normal in the Christian life?
- Why should you consider yourself normal, and non-believers as crazy?
- How have you embraced crazy as normal in your life this year?

## 3. Think more about heaven.

*For he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God. (Hebrews 11:10)*

*They admitted that they were aliens and strangers on earth . . . They were longing for a better country - a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them. (Hebrews 11:13b, 16)*

- How much do you think about heaven? (be honest)
- What do you think about when you think about heaven?
- What do you think heaven will be like?
- What do you look forward to about heaven?
- What are your biggest questions about heaven?
- How does thinking about heaven more help you live out the crazy love that God desires?

**BIG QUESTION: Does my life demand an explanation?**

“People talk of sacrifice I have made in spending so much of my life in Africa . . . I never made a sacrifice. We ought not to talk of ‘sacrifice’ when we remember the great sacrifice which He made who left His Father’s throne on high to give Himself for us.” - David Livingston

## 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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