

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 Seven – Money

Ice Breakers

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

- A. *If you were on Who Wants to be a Millionaire, who would be your phone a friend lifeline?*
- B. *Which stores tempt you the most to spend money?*
- C. *What do you do with the loose change that collects in your house?*

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.

Micah has started a new sermon series on relationships called Seven. Lawyers in California came up with the top seven reasons why marriage relationships end in divorce. There is no doubt that relationships are difficult and we need help to understand how to make them last. Good thing we have the Bible to help guide us in through the relationship challenges in our lives. God wants us to have meaningful relationships that bring Him the glory that He deserves. Our marriage relationships paint a beautiful picture of God’s love and redemption through the person of Jesus Christ.

This sermon series will provide much needed help for married couples and good foundational truth for singles. God’s Word speaks with authority and power to the challenge of making marriage relationships last a lifetime. We hope this series encourages each of you to work hard to make your marriage relationships God honoring. You will not be able to do it alone, but with the help of God’s Spirit speaking through His Word, you will have everything that you need.

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 in your group read Matthew 6:21.

The #1 source of arguments in marriage is over money.

The #1 cause of divorce in the first seven years of marriage is money.

- Why is money so tough on marriages?
- Why do two people sharing each other's money struggle to work together?
- Why do so many people still buy lottery tickets even though the odds are stacked against them?

Over 2,300 verses in the Bible are about money.

Jesus spoke more about money than heaven and hell combined.

- Do you think rich people's marriages struggle as much as poor people's marriages?
- Why doesn't more money cure the problems that money brings into marriage?

1. God owns everything.

The earth is the LORD's, and everything in it. (Psalm 24:1a)

You may say to yourself, "My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me." But remember the LORD your God, for it is He who gives you the ability to produce wealth. (Deuteronomy 8:17-18a)

- Why is this truth difficult for those living in the American culture?
- Why are we so attached to our stuff?
- What are some things that you own, that you don't ever intend on selling or getting any real use out of?
- If you really believe this truth, how should it affect the way you deal with money?
- How should it affect the way you look at your job/career?

2. Don't spend more than He gives you.

"Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions." (Luke 12:15)

I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. (Philippians 4:11b)

- What is your favorite store? If you were given 5 minutes to get whatever you could into a shopping cart, what would you grab?
- Why does it seem easier to spend when you are not paying with cash?
- How can you become content when you don't yet have what you want?

3. Get out of debt.

Free yourself, like a gazelle from the hand of the hunter, like a bird from the snare of the fowler. (Proverbs 6:5)

- Easier said than done right? How do you get started?
- When you spend what you don't have, what are you telling God?

4. Make a plan.

No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money. (Matthew 6:24)

- Why is it critical for the husband and wife to make a plan together?
- What role should prayer play in the plan?

5. Give.

Bring the whole tithe into my storehouse . . . Test me in this," says the LORD Almighty, "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it." (Malachi 3:10)

For God so loved the world that He gave . . . (John 3:16)

- Wait a second. How does giving money help you with money problems?
- Does obedient giving guarantee that God will give you the money back at some point?
- God doesn't need any money, so how is giving all about what you need than what God needs?

Assignment:

For Everyone: Make a Budget and Change

"Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much . . . So if you have not been trustworthy in handling worldly wealth, who will trust you with true riches?" (Luke 16:10-11)

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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