

# 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 Afterlife – Why does hell exist?

## Ice Breakers

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

- A. *What is your favorite time of the year and why?*
- B. *What do you like to do when you go to the beach?*
- C. *What is your favorite traveling food that you get from a gas station?*

### **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.

Micah has started a new sermon series called Afterlife. Many people live in fear because they are unsure what will happen after they die. They try to avoid thinking about it, but death is all around us. All you have to do is turn on the TV or read the headlines, and you are reminded of the reality of death. What if you could know for sure what will happen after you die? Would that change the way you are living right now?

God does not want us to be unsure of what happens in the afterlife, so He has clearly revealed to us in the Bible what will happen when we die. Hope for the afterlife is part of what makes the Gospel the “good news”. As Christians, we should not fear death and our thoughts about the afterlife should change the way that we are living in the here and now. While it’s not easy to talk about death, it’s very important that we understand what the Bible tells us on this difficult subject.

# 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 25:41.

83% of Americans believe in Heaven.

50% of Americans believe in Hell.

## 1. For God to Deal Righteously with Satan.

*Then He will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. (Matthew 25:41)*

*The devil, who deceived them, was thrown into the lake of burning sulfur . . . They will be tormented day and night for ever and ever. (Revelation 20:10)*

- How do you visualize Satan in your mind?
- What actor do you think would make a good Satan in a movie?
- What do you believe about angels and demons?
- Why do many churches shy away from talking about hell or Satan?
- Why is it important for the church to teach about hell and Satan?

## 2. For God to Deal Righteously with unbelievers.

*"Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life." (Matthew 25:46)*

- Why is it difficult to think about God punishing people for all eternity?
- Why does God have to punish sin?
- How does God's righteous justice make Him a perfect loving God?
- Were you frustrated when O.J. didn't go to prison?
- Why do we demand justice in our culture, but then we want God to always be merciful?
- Do you believe God is being fair even when He condemns someone to suffer in hell for all eternity?

*"There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and lived in luxury every day. At his gate was laid a beggar named Lazarus, covered with sores and longing to eat what fell from the rich man's table . . .*

*"The time came when the beggar died and the angels carried him to*

*Abraham's side. The rich man also died and was buried. In hell, where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side. So he called to him, 'Father Abraham, have pity on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in agony in this fire. . . "He answered, 'Then I beg you, father, send Lazarus to my father's house, for I have five brothers. Let him warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment.' (Luke 16:19-24, 27-28)*

- 1) He was fully conscious.
- 2) His eternal destiny was irrevocably fixed.
- 3) He knew what he was experiencing was just.
- 4) He pleaded for someone to tell his loved ones about Jesus.

*The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance. (2 Peter 3:9)*

*I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart. (Romans 9:2)*

“Sir, I do not share your faith, but if I did – if I believed what you say you believe – then even if England were covered with broken glass from coast to coast, I would crawl the length and breadth of it on hand and knee and think the pain worthwhile, just to save a single soul from this eternal hell of which you speak.”

Charles Peace

- Thinking about hell should motivate you to share Jesus with others. Why?
- How is it a loving act to tell someone they are going to hell?
- Some “Christians” don’t believe that hell is a real place. What do you think about that?
- Have you learned something new about hell this week?
- How has this weighty message affected your life this week?
- How can we remind ourselves about the reality of hell on a regular basis?
- Why is it important to keep an eternal perspective each day?
- Ultimately we all deserve to spend eternity in hell. Have you thanked God recently for grace and heaven?

## 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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