

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 20 minutes of fellowship at the beginning and 1 hour of group time.)

Now you are ready for group time!

LifeGuide for Relationships 2.0 – Attack the Heart

Ice Breakers

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

- A. *What is your favorite reality television show right now?*
- B. *What do you like to do while traveling on an airplane?*
- C. *Do you text much on your cell phone?*

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.

God is doing an amazing work at Real Life Fellowship! The fall is always an exciting time for a church as people get back to their normal family schedules and new people are checking out churches. We need to be ready as a church to help people connect during this season of change and growth.

Real Life Fellowship is changing and growing, and this fall may prove to be the most important fall we have faced as a church. We have several new campuses including OKC and the Spanish Campus as well as new campuses launching soon like Tulsa/BA, San Antonio, and DTown CC. Portland and Hartwell are moving into new buildings, and we are anticipating exponential growth over the next 2 years.

This weekend Micah started a new series called Relationships 2.0 which is based on Galatians 5:16-26. We live in a world of technology – texting, social networking, cell phones and internet – all designed to help us connect. Ironically, our relationships are struggling, our friendships are frustrating and today more than ever people feel lonely and isolated. Is there a way to strengthen your connection with the people in your life? Let’s find out what God’s Word has to say about relationships.

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.

Leaders, remind your group of the one goal we are to have this new year, and really for the rest of our lives. Challenge your groups to memorize the verses below.

So we make it our goal to please Him. (2 Corinthians 5:9a)

We obey his commands and do what pleases Him. And this is his command: to believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and to love one another as he commanded us. (1 John 3:22b-23)

I can do everything through Christ, who gives me strength. (Philippians 4:13)

Leaders: Early in the fall is one of the best times to get people connected and locked in to church. Make sure you are diligent to contact the people in your group each week and encourage them to stay committed to the group. Don’t feel like you are bothering people. They will appreciate it when you call as long as you are loving and encouraging. You will notice that this guide is basically Micah’s sermon notes with stuff added to help you create discussion.

- What is your favorite fruit?
- Have you ever eaten fruit fresh right off the tree or vine?

Each tree is recognized by its own fruit. People do not pick figs from thornbushes, or grapes from briars. The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For out of the overflow of his heart his mouth speaks. (Luke 6:44-45)

heart = communication = relationship

Leaders: When the Bible refers to the heart, it’s talking about the center of our thoughts, desires, and emotions. In our culture we tend to think of only the emotions when we refer to the heart, but the Biblical concept includes much more than just how we feel. The verse above could read, “For out of the overflow of who we are on the inside, the mouth speaks.” Make sure your group understands this truth because it is the key to understanding how we need to better communicate in our relationships.

Get Rid of Pride

Do not boast about tomorrow, for you do not know what a day may bring forth. Let another praise you, and not your own mouth; someone else, and not your own lips. (Proverbs 27:1-2)

- Pride can be a difficult concept to manage in our culture. When is pride considered a good thing?
- When is pride considered a bad thing?
- When does the idea of pride get blurry in our thinking sometimes?
- Pride is the root of all sin. How would you explain that to non-Christian?

Get Rid of Gossip

You will keep your friends if you forgive them, but you will lose your friends if you keep talking about what they did wrong. (Proverbs 17:9 CEV)

- Do you think you gossip more than you think you do?
- What are some of the ways that we justify gossip?
- Have you ever over-heard someone gossiping about you? How did it make you feel?
- How can we get better at avoiding the situations and conversations that tend to lead to gossip?

Get Rid of Anything that isn't helpful

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. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, (Ephesians 4:29-30a)

The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. (Galatians 5:22-23a)

- When do you think good humor goes bad?
- What do you think about roasting someone?
- I do believe that God wants us to joke around with each other, but how can we do it in a way that doesn't tear each other down?

Store Up Kindness

A kind word always brings cheer. (Proverbs 12:25b CEV)

If you keep on biting and devouring each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other. (Galatians 5:15)

- Do you like an organized attic or storage room, or are you ok with just throwing stuff in there?
- Why is it so natural to crack jokes at each other and so awkward to share kind words openly?
- Has a simple kind word ever brightened up your day?

Store Up Gentleness

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

- Why do we tend to equate gentleness with weakness?
- In what ways does it take a strong individual to be gentle?

Store Up Self Control

Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry.
(James 1:19b)

Search me, O God, and know my heart. (Psalm 139:23a)

- What are some areas in your life that have difficulty practicing self control within?
- How can you work on being quick to listen and slow to speak this week?

Wrap Up

Sum up the lesson by re-capping the main points 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 or to save time just pray your 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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