

LIFE GROUPS

The Vision –

INTRODUCTION

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

ICE BREAKER QUESTION: Why is it vital for Christians to be known as generous?

Read back through the passage before going through the questions.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1. What is your biggest takeaway? How was your experience with the Life Tool's this past week?**

- 2. What does it mean to allow God's Word to be the authority in our lives? How do you respond when God's Word says something different than what you thought about God?**

"The idea that all the words in Scripture are God's words in such a way that to disbelieve or disobey any word of Scripture is to disbelieve or disobey God...The phrase 'the authority of Scripture' must be understood to be shorthand for 'the authority of God as he speaks through Scripture.' . . . The authority of Scripture is a statement about what God did in authoring Scripture, and about how he continues to act in relation to Scripture"

- Grudem, Wayne. "Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine", (p. 128).

"The gospel itself is proof that not one word of God has failed."

- Barret, Matthew. "The Authority and Inerrancy of Scripture"; Essay on Gospel Coalition.

a. In what ways has your view of the Bible changed based on our discussion?

3. What is supernatural about the local church community? Is your church community dependent upon the Spirit of God?

"One way in which this community glorifies God is by reaching people who, apart from supernatural power, would never unite together. Remember Ephesians 2:18: "For through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father." Second, this community is notable for its depth. That is, it doesn't merely bring people together to tolerate each other, but to be so tightly committed that Paul can call them a "new humanity" (2:15) and a new "household" (2:19, NIV). Paul reaches for the natural world's deepest bonds—the bonds of ethnicity and family—to describe this new community in the local church."

- Dever, Mark; Dunlop, Jamie. *The Compelling Community (9Marks)* (p. 25). Crossway. Kindle Edition.

"They do. If community in your local church is not dependent on God's supernatural Spirit for its lifeblood, it is not evidently supernatural. If it is not evidently supernatural, it is counterfeit community. It's posing as biblical community but fails to accomplish its purpose. It fails to show off the wisdom of God to the world (Eph. 3:10)."

- Dever, Mark; Dunlop, Jamie. *The Compelling Community (9Marks)* (pp. 36-37). Crossway. Kindle Edition.

a. Does love exist in a community that is formed around something other than the Gospel?

4. How is Deuteronomy 6:7-9 calling us to make home the primary place of discipleship?

In verses 7-9, there are some teaching methods that might sound strange to us. We don't usually bind God's Word on our hands or put it as a symbol on our foreheads. The bigger principle here is one of consistency. That's how we impress God's commands on our children—it's through consistently and regularly talking about them and living them out together as a family.

God wanted this faith teaching not only to be something that happens at a scheduled time; He wanted it to be ingrained in the culture of the family. These verses emphasize the regular and continuous effort at teaching the faith. This teaching happens when you get up, when you go to sleep, when you're inside the house and outside of it.

"God deserves to be worshiped daily in our homes by our families"

- Whitney, Donald. "Worthy of Family Worship", Article on Gospel Coalition

"Every Christian family ought to be as it were a little church"

- (*Works of Jonathan Edwards*, 25:484).

"How did Isaac know that they did not have everything necessary for a sacrifice? How did he know that the worship of God involved fire, wood, and a lamb? Or that the lamb would be sacrificed as a burnt offering? Isaac knew these things because he must have long been familiar with sacrifices and the worship of God."

- Whitney, Donald. "Family Worship", (24)

5. **Who is responsible to share the Gospel and carry out the Great Commission? What do you see as your role in sharing the Gospel and carrying out the Great Commission?**

"Making disciples by going, baptizing, and teaching people the Word of Christ and then enabling them to do the same thing in other people's lives—this is the plan God has for each of us to impact nations for the glory of Christ."

— David Platt, Radical: Taking Back Your Faith from the American Dream

"The church is not fundamentally a human idea, or a human creation. Fundamentally, it is God's idea and God's work. In one sense, God is the great church planter!" – Dever, Mark, Understanding the Great Commission, (16)

"We will not wish we had made more money, acquired more stuff, lived more comfortably, taken more vacations, watched more television, pursued greater retirement, or been more successful in the eyes of this world. Instead, we will wish we had given more of ourselves to living for the day when every nation, tribe, people, and language will bow around the throne and sing the praises of the Savior who delights in radical obedience and the God who deserves eternal worship."

— David Platt, Radical: Taking Back Your Faith from the American Dream

"Every saved person this side of heaven owes the gospel to every lost person this side of hell."

~ - David Platt, Radical: Taking Back Your Faith from the American Dream

“A Great Commission church works to train its members in evangelism, because it knows they will collectively see more non-Christians throughout the week than will ever be able to fit in the church building. So ‘success’ in evangelism is not simply bringing your non-Christian friends to church so that they hear the gospel. Success is sharing the gospel with your non-Christian neighbors and friends.” – Dever, Mark, *Understanding the Great Commission*, (36)

a. How do we often take the process of making disciples and try to do it in our own strength? Why is it far better to rely on Christ?

This mission is not based on who we are or what we can do. This mission is based on who Jesus is and what He is able to do in and through our lives. The Great Commission is not only accomplished through Jesus’ power, but through His abiding presence. When we try and make disciples on our own, we miss the whole point of disciple making. We can do nothing without Jesus. As we are sent on mission, we rely on His presence.

"This is how God works. He puts people in positions where they are desperate for his power, and then he shows his provision in ways that display his greatness"

- David Platt

6. Why is understanding that vision is the purpose for the Capital Campaign important?

a. If the capital campaign is not the “Brisket”, what is the “BRISKET”?

7. Why does the Bible tell us to give? Why is it important to tithe first before we give to anything else?

“I honestly believe that if you invest in the kingdom of God, you won’t lose anything in the final analysis. Tithe from the top, and learn to do that as early as you can in life. If your child gets a dollar allowance, make sure that the first ten cents goes into the collection plate on Sunday, so the child learns the principle early. We know we cannot spend the tax the government takes out of our paycheck. We must live on our “take home” pay. Our obligation to God takes precedence over our obligation to government. God should get paid first, “from the top.” If you want to know how serious you are about investing in God’s kingdom, look at your checkbook. It is an objective, concrete record of where your treasure is and where your heart is.”

- R.C. Sproul

a. Why do you think some people react with skepticism and doubt when a church or ministry leader talks about giving?

Giving is another way to apply the principle that God owns it all and we're simply His stewards. Giving positions our hearts to respond in gratitude for God's provision and to surrender to His ownership of all we have.

8. Does it matter what your motive for giving is as long as you're being obedient? Why or why not?

Going through the motions—even if they are the right motions—is insufficient to fully please the Lord. He does not want our sacrifices if we do not intend to obey Him in other matters. It is vital that we strive to do what the Lord wants us to do in all things and that we quickly and truly repent when we have failed to obey Him.

9. What is the result of giving reluctantly or because someone compelled you to do so? What is the result of giving generously, cheerfully, and sacrificially?

a. Which of the following action steps do you need to take in order to grow in the area of generous and cheerful giving: make it a matter of prayer, understand that the God we serve is not a God of limited resources, or give without hesitation?

b. How should God's ultimate gift to us compel us to give? Besides our financial resources, what other gifts should we use for God's glory?

"A new 5-year constituency study released by the State of the Plate gives an inside look at the financial, giving, and spiritual practices of 4,413 people who donate 10% or more each year. According to the [Christian Post](#), researchers compared tithers to non-tithers using nine financial health indicators, and found that tithers were better off in every category. "The weird thing is, a tither looks at that and says to himself, 'Well I'm better off because I give.' A non-tither looks at that and says, 'Oh, they give because they're better off,'" said Brian Kluth, the founder of the study."

"The true riches of grace and joy are the returns on the investment of generous giving."

- Jon Bloom

"In God's gracious economy of joy, we don't need to fear running out of grace and joy."

- Jon Bloom

PRAYER

Pray that God would continually remind your group that all we have comes from Him and should be used to bless others. Close your time in silence and prayer, listening to what God is teaching you and asking Him for wisdom.



FURTHER STUDY

<https://www.desiringgod.org/messages/toward-the-tithe-and-beyond>

<https://www.ligonier.org/learn/articles/stewardship-tithing-and-giving>

<https://www.ligonier.org/learn/devotionals/importance-of-obedience>

<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/study-christians-who-tithe-have-healthier-finances/>

<https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/giving-is-the-greatest-wealth>