

# SRC Life Groups

## *A Handbook*

	<u>Page</u>
1. <b>Vision</b> of SRC and SRC Life Groups —————	2
2. <b>Qualifications</b> of Life Group Leaders —————	3
3. <b>Commitments</b> of Life Group Leaders —————	4
4. <b>Elements</b> of a Healthy Life Group —————	5-6
5. <b>Covenant</b> for Life Group Leaders —————	7
6. <b>5 Values</b> for Life Group Leaders —————	7
7. <b>Tools</b> —————	8
◆ Shepherding the Heart	
◆ Gospel Waltz	
8. <b>Appendix</b> —————	9-20
◆ #1: New Life Groups	
◆ #2: Tips for Leading Group Time	
◆ #3: Using a Sermon Discussion Guide	
◆ #4: Multiplying Your Group	
◆ #5: Biblical Resources and Helps to Go Deeper	
◆ #6: Life Group Huddle Leaders	
◆ #7: 4-Week Study of the Gospel	
◆ #8: Understanding Our Heart, Idols, and Our “Sin-Beneath-the-Sin”	
◆ #9: Defining our Need for Biblical Community	
◆ #10: 4-Week Study of an Overview of the Bible	

## Vision of SRC

We exist to bring the hope of the gospel to broken people and broken places

- ▶ **Renewing GRACE:** An understanding that the gospel of grace is the dynamic for all life-change
- ▶ **Redemptive COMMUNITY:** A place of unusual devotion to one another in a world of disconnection
- ▶ **Relentless MISSION:** A welcoming orientation toward secular people who don't believe in Christianity

*What is most compelling  
to you about this vision?*

## Vision of SRC Life Groups

Life Groups exist to help us become and make mature disciples  
who **GROW** spiritually, **CONNECT** relationally, and **SERVE** intentionally.

- ▶ **GROW** with other believers toward spiritual maturity in Christ by living out SRC core values in all of life<sup>1</sup>
- ▶ **CONNECT** with other believers in authentic, gospel-centered, life-giving community and mutual care<sup>2</sup>
- ▶ **SERVE** with other believers by using the gifts and resources God's given you to love and serve your neighbor in Jesus name where you live, work, learn and play.<sup>3</sup>

*How are connecting, growing,  
& serving important parts of  
being a disciple of Christ?*

---

<sup>1</sup> Ephesians 4:12-16 - ...for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, and **become mature**, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ... so that we may **no longer be children**... Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to **grow up** in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body **grow** so that it builds itself up in love; Col. 1:28 - Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone **mature** in Christ.

<sup>2</sup> Life Groups help us live out all the “**one another's**” in Scripture; Rom. 12:10 - **Love one another** with brotherly affection. **Outdo one another** in showing honor; 1John 4:11 - Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to **love one another**; 1 Cor. 12:25 - ... have the same **care for one another**; Gal. 6:2 - **Bear one another's burdens**, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

<sup>3</sup> - 1 Peter 4:10 - As each has received a gift, use it to **serve** one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace...; Gal. 6:10 - So then, as we have opportunity, let us **do good to everyone**, and especially to those who are [Christians]; Col. 4:5-6 - Walk in wisdom toward outsiders, making the best use of the time. Let your speech always be gracious seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person.

## Qualifications of LG Leaders

### 1. Faithful

- ◆ Faithful to the Lord: You pursue to know, enjoy, and obey God, without major areas of ongoing willful unrepentance
- ◆ Faithful to your Family: You strive to sacrificially love your spouse and children
- ◆ Faithful to the Church: You attend corporate worship most weekends and are involved with the life of the church

*Are there any of these where you feel you are unfaithful in this season of life?*

### 2. Growing Spiritually

- ◆ You make effort to spend personal time with the Lord, reading His Word and prayer
- ◆ You make effort to grow in God's grace, Christlikeness, and living on mission
- ◆ You make effort to some sort of active repentance and faith in your life

*In which of these do you feel strongest and weakest?*

### 3. Aligned with SRC

You have a basic understanding of Reformed Theology and commit to not teach anything contrary

- The whole Bible is the triune God's revelation of himself; it is infallible and authoritative
- God is sovereign, rules over all things, and has ordained all things that come to pass
- We (& you) are depraved by nature, dead in our sins, spiritually helpless & unable to save ourselves
- The Old & New Testaments tell the story of God's covenant of grace toward His people, the Church, building through covenants, & culminating in the New Covenant through the person & work of Christ
- We (& you) are chosen by God, saved by grace through faith alone, apart from our good works
- Christ's life, death & resurrection fully accomplished the salvation for those who receive it by faith
- Grace motivates all true believers (& you) to live by faith, die unto sin, and strive for holiness in all of life
- Our ultimate calling as Christians is to glorify and enjoy God forever
- You support the church in its worship, its work, and its leadership to the best of your ability
- We are commissioned by God to love our neighbor and fulfill the Great Commission

*Do you need clarity or have any disagreement with any of these?*

### 4. Able to Lead

- ◆ By ensuring there is a regular meeting schedule, good communication, a place to meet, food (if having it), a welcoming, hospitable environment, a time limit that is kept, etc.  
Note: The leader is ideally delegating many of these responsibilities to other group members
- ◆ By facilitating and directing conversation and asking good questions (not teaching)

*What makes you most excited about leading a Life Group?*

## Commitments of LG Leaders

### 1. GROW Spiritually

- ◆ To aim to grow up in Christ together
- ◆ To create a safe environment for people to struggle, fail, and not have it all together. To prevent any seeds of negativity, gossip, judgmentalism, or harshness that may hurt mutual love, openness, and trust
- ◆ To facilitate conversation and ask good questions (not teach at them), using only approved curriculum

Note: Aim to use the Sermon Discussion Guide at least 1/2 the time

*Which of these do you  
find most valuable?*

*Which of these will you  
struggle with most?*

### 2. CONNECT Relationally

- ◆ To love, value, and welcome the members God brings into your Life Group
- ◆ To model authenticity/vulnerability toward building relationships of mutual love and care within your group
- ◆ To show grace toward your self, SRC, and each other even when it's hard

*Which of these do you  
find most valuable?*

*Which of these will you  
struggle with most?*

#### Healthy Range of Connecting & Growing

*Unbalanced*

- Only fellowship and connecting without any spiritual content to discuss

*Connecting  
Relationally*

*"If you can read  
you can lead"*

*Growing  
Spiritually*

*"I read  
commentaries  
to prepare."*

*Unbalanced*

- No social time in or outside of group time
- Leader only lectures without discussion & life application

### 3. SERVE Intentionally

- ◆ To model missional living by loving and serving your unchurched "neighbor"
- ◆ To invite others into using their gifts and passions in the group by sharing responsibilities of hosting, providing food, communication, and even facilitating conversation
- ◆ To interact with the Life Group Pastor or Huddle Leader for equipping and encouragement

*Which of these do you  
find most valuable?*

*Which of these will you  
struggle with most?*

## Elements of a Healthy Life Group

Connecting - Growing - Serving

### GENERAL ELEMENTS:

- ◆ **Group includes time for fellowship (1/3) along with engaging Biblical content and prayer (2/3)**
- ◆ You begin and end at the time you said you would begin and end
- ◆ A healthy group generally includes 12-16 people
- ◆ Have seasons of inviting new members in at the start of the semester or after a new members class
- ◆ Develop leaders by delegating responsibilities, allowing others to host and lead the discussion

*What other elements of a healthy Life Group do you hope to apply?*

### GROWING:

➡ *Things that help move your group toward spiritual maturity in Christ*

- ◆ Talk about the aim and expectation of spiritual growth and maturity as a group
  - “How would we like to see God work in our group or your life this semester?”
- ◆ **You’re not just talking about what a passage says but also about how you can apply it to your life**
- ◆ You are identifying areas of needed growth and moving towards encouragement and accountability
- ◆ **Applying the preached Word by using the Sermon Discussion Guide (use at least 1/2 the time)**
- ◆ Address anyone who is bringing judgment, criticism, negativity, or gossip into the group
- ◆ Frequently ask them for a story of how they have God at work recently
- ◆ Include prayer requests that come out of your study, that include specific areas spiritual growth
- ◆ Record prayer requests. Pray for your group members outside of group time.

*Mark the ones you want  
to prioritize?*

*Write down other things you think would  
help your members connect to one another*

## CONNECTING:

➡ *Things that help create authentic, gospel-centered, life-giving community and mutual care*

- ◆ Meeting consistently (2+ times/month)
- ◆ Ask one person or couple to share their life/spiritual story each week
- ◆ Ask a “get to know you” question at the start of each meeting
  - Ex. “Share something significant that happened in each third of your life
- ◆ **Connect socially outside of group time. Be involved in others life events.**
- ◆ You are caring for each others emotional and felt needs
- ◆ Providing snacks or deserts at the meetings helps facilitate fellowship
- ◆ Encourage everyone to contribute in the discussion. Exhort anyone who talks too much to listen more
- ◆ Celebrate birthdays
- ◆ Maintain a high standard for both vulnerability and confidentiality
- ◆ Help mediate any conflict between members
- ◆ Record prayer requests. Pray for one another and check in outside of group time

*Mark the ones you want  
to prioritize?*

*Write down any other things you think would  
help your members connect to one another*

---

---

## SERVING:

➡ *Things that encourage your group to use the gifts and resources God’s given to love and serve neighbors in Jesus name where they live, work, learn and play.*

- ◆ Ask in prayer time if there is any unchurched or non-Christian they are associated with you can pray for
- ◆ Ask in prayer time if anyone has a story of getting to love, serve or share with their “neighbor”
- ◆ Pray for kingdom and missional things going on in our country and world
- ◆ Encourage and help your group members to identify a ministry role where they can serve in the church
- ◆ Delegate LG responsibilities to others so they can use their gifts (food, social events, prayer, etc)
- ◆ Identify and help develop those with gifts to lead a future LG
- ◆ Volunteer to serve together somewhere in the community (We can give you a list of opportunities)
- ◆ Adopt a missionary to support and pray for

*Mark the ones you want  
to prioritize?*

*Write down other things you think would  
help your members connect to one another*

---

---

## Life Group Leader Covenant

As a life group leader at SRC, I agree to the following...

- ◆ To pursue faithfulness to the Lord, my family and the church
- ◆ To pursue your own spiritual growth
- ◆ To let us know if or when you have major disagreements with SRC's theology or anything else
- ◆ To lead your group to the best of your ability
- ▶ To show grace to SRC, yourself and others when and where anyone falls short of any of the above
  
- ◆ To help my group **connect relationally** as defined on page 3
- ◆ To help my group **grow spiritually** as defined on page 3
- ◆ To help my group **serve intentionally** as defined on page 3
- ▶ To show grace to SRC, yourself and others when and where anyone falls short of any of the above

### 5 Values for Leaders:

1. **Walk Faithfully:** Your first priority in leading others is to lead yourself. You may be struggling emotionally or spiritually, but you are striving to face the right direction, faithful to the Lord in coming to weekend worship and engaging in personal Bible reading, faithful to your family and to your small group members. — Psalm 37:3
2. **Live Honestly:** You are striving to live honestly before God and others. We must resist the temptation to always have to be strong and have the right answers. Lead with a limp, as a fellow sinner and struggler. Model vulnerability that you expect from them. Exemplify of your own need for a Savior and his great love. — 2 Cor. 12:9-10
3. **Know Thoroughly:** We all have a deep longing to be known for who we really are and still accepted and loved. Yet we all feel the shame of being deeply known and therefore try to hide. Make your group a place for people to share and be known. Jesus knows all our junk and yet still has great affection for us. — 1 Thes. 2:7-8
4. **Endure Graciously:** Many people will come in rough around the edges, with hard stories and bad theology. Some will talk too much and some too little. Some will be spiritually immature. Allow people to be in process. Create an environment of grace, showing the same patience and grace we have received from God. — Eph. 4:2
5. **Direct Biblically:** We are called to not only love our group members, but direct them to Biblical truth. We can't change people, but God's Word is alive and powerful, and it alone leads to lasting life transformation. Make sure opinions are backed by what the text says. "What did the passage say? Let's read it again." — Heb. 4:12

## TOOL 1: Shepherd the Heart

Prov. 4:23; Prov. 22:13; Matt. 7:17-18; Luke 6:45; 2 Cor. 5:14

**Goal:** Identifying the issue, asking good questions and active listening to help shepherd their heart

**[Thoughts]** “What are you **THINKING** about that...?”

**[Feelings]** “How does that make you **FEEL**...?”

**[Desires]** “What **DESIRES** do you have because of that...?”

**[Choices]** “What **CHOICES** do you want to make as a result?”



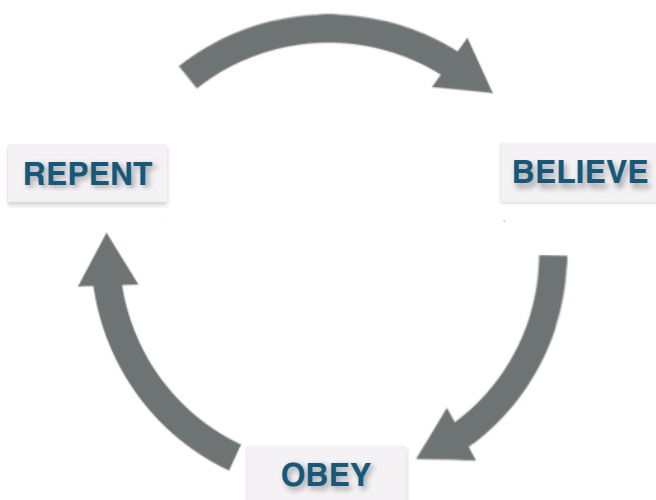
*“Whatever captures the heart’s trust and love also controls the feelings and behavior. What the heart most wants the mind finds reasonable, the emotions find valuable, and the will finds doable... What makes people into what they are is the order of their loves - what they love most, more, less, and least. That is more fundamental to who you are than even the beliefs to which you mentally subscribe. Your loves show what you actually believe in, not what you say and do. People, therefore, change not by merely changing their thinking but by changing what they love most. Such a shift requires nothing less than changing your thinking, but it entails much more.” - Tim Keller*

## TOOL 2: Gospel Waltz



*“Preach the gospel to yourself every day”*

### Gospel Waltz



*“Every human being is a worshiper, in active pursuit of the thing that rules his heart. This worship shapes everything we do and say, who we are, and how we live. This is why the heart is always our target in personal ministry.” - Paul Tripp*

*“The highest of all God’s commands is this, that we ever hold up before our eyes the image of his dear Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. He must daily be to our hearts the perfect mirror, in which we behold how much God loves us and how well, in his infinite goodness, as a faithful God, he has grandly cared for us in that he gave his dear Son for us. Do not let this mirror and throne of grace be torn away from before your eyes.” - Martin Luther*

*“...repentance is the way we make progress in the Christian life. Indeed, pervasive, all-of-life-repentance is the best sign that we are growing deeply and rapidly into the character of Jesus.” - Tim Keller*



## Appendix 1: New Life Groups

### Recruiting New People:

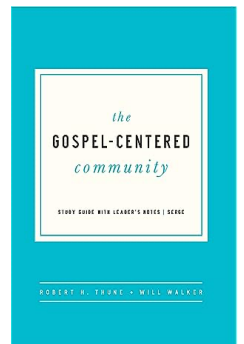
We are glad to point people who are interested in a Life Group to your new group. However, the best way to add people is through you personally inviting them. Start with friends and others you know that aren't in a group. Then ask people you see at church if they are in a group. Try to prioritize those who live closest to you as proximity often better lends to doing life together community.

### First Few Meetings:

- ◆ Share the vision of Life Groups (see p. 2) in your first few meetings. It's good for them to know what you are aiming at.
- ◆ Build a culture of connection early by going around and asking people to share their story. Model early the type of vulnerability you'd like to see in your group. You can do this a few ways:
  - Share something significant that happened in each 3rd of your life. (Ex. If 60 years old, share something from 0-20, 21-40, and 41-60).
  - Share the story of your spiritual journey.
  - Share how you met your spouse, along with what you have found more rewarding and challenging in marriage.

### First Curriculum to Use:

We ask all new Life Groups to begin with the 9-week study, **“The Gospel-Centered Community.”** It includes 9 lessons and will give you an opportunity to build a strong foundation of how to grow in the gospel as a Life Group.



### Other suggestions:

- ◆ Frequency: Set the day, time and frequency that best meets your and group members schedule.
- ◆ Food: Try to have something, whether snacks or deserts at every meeting. Rotate who brings it.
- ◆ Outside Socials: Try to organize having at least 2-3 socials outside of group time the first semester. Have someone host a dinner or game night. Meet at a park or someones house to swim one Saturday. This helps set the expectation that this is not merely a Bible Study.
- ◆ Delegate: Delegate responsibilities of providing food, organizing social activities, taking prayer requests, and even leading the discussion.

## Appendix 2: TIPS for Leading Group Time

### **[NOTES AT THIS POINT]**

#### **7 habits of effective small-group leaders are:**

1. **Pray** for your group and group members
2. **Create** an atmosphere of welcome and love for one another
3. **Communicate** well with group members inside and outside of group time
4. **Prepare** for the group meeting by going over the schedule, content and questions to discuss
5. **Delegate** responsibilities to other group members, especially other potential leaders
6. **Gather** in social activities outside of group times
7. **Aim for** spiritual growth and expect deeper friendships

#### **Principles of Leading Group Time**

**1. Create a safe environment:** Make it safe for people to be vulnerable and share hard things by doing things like 1) ensuring confidentiality within the group, 2) limit advice-giving, criticism, and disagreement, and 3) responding appropriately when there are emotions involved

**2. Move at a good speed:** Avoid going so slow that it leaves members constantly frustrated you don't get to passages or questions they really wanted to address toward the end, but also going so fast that it doesn't give people time to think, flesh out, or apply what you are discussing.

**3. Ask good questions and listen:** Ask questions that engage the heart, emotions and will, not simply the mind. Actively listen to answers. Try to discern what is below the surface of their questions or answers. What theological misunderstanding, misaligned hopes/desires, fear or anxiety, etc are there. Listen to what their heart is saying so you can help get God's much needed grace into those crevasses of brokenness.

**4. Lead the right amount:** It's easy to talk too much as the leader. Remember to give time to let others answer first, to ask open-ended and follow-up questions. It's also possible to lead too little though. Keep the group on track and redirect unhelpful tangents. There is sometimes a "wrong answer." Listen to thoughts and opinions, but refer back to God's Word to what God says rather than leaving people with opinions.


## Appendix 3: Using the Sermon Discussion Guide

Sermon Discussion Guides are made each week to help Life Groups all the more understand, encourage one another, and apply the preached Word. It contains questions to help your group members:

1. Understand the meaning of the passage/sermon
2. Mutually encourage each other through the passage/sermon
3. Apply the passage/sermon to their lives specifically

1. Start with the warm-up question
2. Read the passage
3. Ask the questions and cultivate conversation
4. Keep people on the subject without unnecessary tangents
5. The goal is gospel transformation, to be affected by God's Word, more aware of God's love and grace, and motivated to be do'ers of the Word.

SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE



SEVEN RIVERS  
C H U R C H

A CULTURE OF GOSPEL: **JOY**

TRANSFORMATION • **JOY** • WELCOME • GENERATIONS • WORSHIP • COMMUNITY • MISSION

**Warm-Up Question:**  
What are some of the things in life that bring you most joy?

**READ: John 15:11; 16:16-24**

**I. THE ABSENCE OF JOY**

- ▶ What are some things that our culture or the world offers us to find our ultimate joy in?
- ▶ What are you most personally tempted to find your ultimate joy in? Can you think of some things you have pursued that have not resulted in lasting joy?

**II. THE SOURCE OF JOY**

- ▶ What do you think about God being a God who is full of joy? Read Psalm 16:11 and 43:4. Do you naturally think of approaching God with fullness of joy?
- ▶ From John 15:11, what do you think it means for Jesus's joy to be "in you"?
- ▶ From Hebrews 12:2, what is a primary motivation for Jesus going to the cross? Discuss what made Jesus feel this way, how that makes you feel.

**III. THE CHOICE OF JOY**

- ▶ From John 16:22-24, Psalm 126:1-2 and Phil. 4:4. Why should joy and laughter be a natural overflow of a Christian (one who has experienced the grace of Christ and love of God)?
- ▶ Share some things that have most recently brought you joy and laughter?
- ▶ In John 16:24, Jesus encourages us to ask of him that our joy will be full. What are some things God might want you to ask for that would result in more joy in your life?

**What is one main take-away you want to apply in your life this week?**

*No soul that seriously and constantly desires joy will ever miss it. Those who seek find. To those who knock it is opened.*  
- C.S. Lewis

*These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full...*  
*Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.*  
- Jesus

*Laughter and fun should always ring through the hallways of the church. The playfulness of secure children of all ages should mark the Father's household.*  
- Ray Cortese

## Appendix 4: Multiplying Your Group

There are usually more people who desire and need to be in a Life Group than we have space for in our groups. There is always a great need to raise up new leaders to start new groups. As Life Group leaders, you have a unique role in helping our church identify and develop such potential leaders. Here's a framework to identify and develop potential leaders through your group. As you explore these stages, identify recurring opportunities within your group that could be used to develop leaders: facilitating icebreakers, organizing social events, meals, facilitating prayer time, leading the sermon discussion, following up with someone in the group, etc.

### **Stage One: I Do / You Watch**

In this stage, you are not asking someone to help you lead. You are recruiting an apprentice to come alongside you to learn about leading. You can simply ask them to watch you lead while giving them a picture of what it would look like for them to lead well in the future. What is important about this stage is that you are modeling what leading looks like. Follow up by sharing what tools you use and what you think through as you lead in that specific area. This is also an opportunity to find out if they have any specific questions.

### **Stage Two: I Do / You Help**

After you show them and discuss the process, you give them a chance to help lead a portion of the group. What is important about this stage, is that they need to carry enough of the weight without feeling all of the responsibility. Follow up with a debrief to find out what they learned, what they would do differently, etc.

### **Stage Three: You Do / I Help**

In this stage, you are asking someone to lead the majority of a specific task. Offer to help them prepare and be available to step in if needed. Be ok with the fact that individuals in this stage may fail. They may make mistakes and that's ok. That is why you are there to help them carry the weight of responsibility. What is important about this stage, is that they are owning most of the responsibility. Afterwards follow up with any insights and give them an opportunity to evaluate themselves and ask questions.

### **Stage Four: You Do / I Celebrate**

At this stage, you are affirming the way in which they have led. What is important about this stage is that you are encouraging them and validating their potential as a leader. Follow up with a clear conversation about the leadership capacities you see in them and areas they need to grow in. Continue to offer them opportunities to lead and care for others within your group.

Evaluate yourself and how you lead through this process. Make adjustments and identify how you can do it differently next time as you continue to identify and develop leaders.



## **Appendix 5: Biblical Resources and Helps to Go Deeper**

### **For Biblical Study:**

<https://www.biblestudytools.com>

<https://www.biblehub.com>

<https://biblia.com/books/esv/Jn1.1>

<https://www.blueletterbible.org>

<https://netbible.org/bible/Matthew+1>

<https://www.biblegateway.com>

<https://tsk-online.com>

<https://www.studydrive.net>

<https://www.stepbible.org>

APP FOR PHONE or TABLET: YouVersion

### **Articles/Sermons/Resources on Passages or Topics:**

<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org>

<https://www.ligonier.org>

<https://www.desiringgod.org>

<https://bibleproject.com>

### **Questions**

<https://www.desiringgod.org/ask-pastor-john>

<https://www.gotquestions.org>

## Appendix 6: Life Group Huddle Leaders

### **Purpose:**

To organize “huddles” where Life Group leaders get together for mutual **encouragement** and **equipping**, so that member of SRC are all the more shepherded well to enjoy Jesus.

### **Qualifications of a Huddle Leader:**

- ◆ All the qualifications of a LG Leader found on page 3
- ◆ Experienced in leading Life Groups
- ◆ Has a shepherd heart with a desire to see more healthy leaders and groups
- ◆ Available to fulfill the commitments of a LG Huddle Leader below

### **Commitments of a Huddle Leader:**

To provide oversight, encouragement and equipping for 2-4 LG Leaders and their group by:

- ◆ Checking in at least 1/month with that LG leader, asking how they and their group are doing
  - This could be at church, a phone call or text, or visiting their group
- ◆ Organizing one LG Leader Huddle 1/semester with 2 group leaders
  - The goal of time is to 1) Ask good questions, listen and learn about their groups, 2) Encourage them however needed, 3) Provide some training/equipping (that will be given to you)
- ◆ Meet with Pastor over LG's 1-2/year

## Life Group Leader Huddles

**Purpose:** Fellowship times where Life Group leaders meet for mutual encouragement and equipping over a meal together

### **Getting to know their group:**

- ◆ Ask some general questions about their group, especially if this is your first meeting with them
  - How long have you been a LG Leader? How long has this group met together?
  - How many members do you have in your group? What's the average gathering size?
  - How often do you meet and where?
  - What is your normal agenda? What do you use for the study/content?

### **Encourage:**

- ◆ Spend time asking questions to get to know them personally and about their Life Group
  - What do you enjoy most about your group? About leading?
  - What is most difficult about your group? About leading?
  - ★ Where have you seen God at work in your group recently? In what areas would you like to see God work in your group?

### **Equip:**

- ◆ Ask questions to help them assess how their group is doing
  - How do you feel like your group is doing overall?
  - In what areas would you like to see your group grow?
  - Remind them of the vision of LG's and ask how they are doing in each area (you might review p. 2-6 before the meeting):
    - Connecting relationally...?
    - Growing spiritually...?
    - Serving intentionally...?
  - Are there any areas you'd like to grow as a leader of a Life Group?
- ◆ Share any insights or wisdom from your experience that might encourage and equip them

### **FAQ:**

- ◆ Q: How will LG Leaders be matched up with Huddle Leaders?  
A: 1) Relationship, 2) Geography
- ◆ Q: How will the Huddle gatherings be arranged?  
A: Huddle leader arranges a time to meet with 2 LG leader couples at a time over lunch or coffee

## Appendix 7: 4-Week Study of the Gospel

- **Week 1:** Discuss "The Centrality of the Gospel" - Tim Keller, PART 1: Implications & Applications, p. 1-4
  - Questions:
    1. What impacted you most from the article? What were your major take-aways?
    2. Was anything confusing or difficult to understand?
    3. How is the gospel "bigger" than you may have previously thought?
    4. What are the 2 "thieves" of the gospel? Which are you more prone toward?
    5. Discuss how having a moralistic view, a hedonistic view, or a gospel view of life would:
      - 1) Affect how you relate to difficult people (parents, friends, children)?
      - 2) Affect your generosity with your money or help the poor?
      - 3) Affect your reaction to being wronged or really hurt by someone like your spouse?
    6. What is a an area of life where you'd like the gospel to better take root and change you?
  - Homework: Read "The Centrality of the Gospel" -Tim Keller, PART 2: The Key to Everything, p. 5ff
    - Choose 2 of the "Approach's" (1 from each section) and come prepared to share how having a moralistic view, a hedonistic view, or a gospel view of life affects that situation.
- **Week 2:** Discuss "The Centrality of the Gospel" - Tim Keller, PART 2: The Key to Everything, p. 5-9
  - Questions:
    1. What impacted you most from Part 2? What were your major take-aways?
    2. Did any of these "approach's" hit close to home personally? How did it encourage you?
    3. Go around and share about the 2 "Approach's" you chose (from the homework). Share how having a moralistic, a hedonistic, or a gospel view of life affects that situation.
    4. If time allows, think of a personal struggle or issue and talk through how having a moralistic, a hedonistic, or a gospel view of life changes how you deal with it.
    5. What is a major take-away from this article?
  - Homework:     Read "The Gospel-Centered Life - Part 1 - The Gospel Grid"  
= About 12 pages   Read "The Gospel-Centered Life - Part 2 - Pretending & Performing"  
                          Read "The Gospel-Centered Life - Part 3 - Believing the Gospel"
- **Week 3:** Discuss "The Gospel-Centered Life - Parts 1-3"
  - Questions:
    1. What impacted you most from Part 1 - The Gospel Grid?
    2. Which "way of minimizing sin" do you most relate with (from p. 4)
    3. What impacted you from Part 2 - Pretending and Performing?
    4. How do you relate with the urge to pretend or perform?
    5. Which "righteousness" from p. 8-9 do you most relate with personally?
    6. Read Romans 3:21-22; 4:4-8 and describe in your own words what Christ's "passive" righteousness means and the implications for us.
    7. Read Romans 8:14-17 and 1 John 3:1-2 and describe what our sonship means and the implications for us.
    8. Share any of the "orphan" mentalities you feel most apply to you. Which on the son/daughter list do you most long to believe and live out?
  - Homework: Read "How Christ Changes Us By His Grace" - Tim Lane & Paul Tripp
- **Week 4:** Read "How Christ Changes Us By His Grace" - Tim Lane & Paul Tripp
  - Questions:
    1. What impacted you most from the article? What were your major take-aways?
    2. *[More questions to come]*



## Appendix 8: Understanding Our Heart, Idols, and Our “Sin-Beneath-the-Sin”

It's so important to remember the goal is not people who simply do better with more external obedience. God didn't want people to simply try to obey better. Nor did God want people to simply learn a lot about him, knowing their theology and doctrine. God wants our hearts. God wants people who know they can never be good enough, who fall so short of his glory, and therefore feel in their heart a desperate need for a Savior. God wants people to fully embrace and enjoy the work of Jesus' life, death and resurrection on our behalf. He wants us to allow that gospel to go deeper and deeper into our heart so that it produces a love for God, love for others, and desire for our heart and life to look more and more like the heart and life of Jesus.

Discipleship shouldn't aim first for what Paul Tripp calls “apple stapling” (in his book, *Instruments in the Redeemers Hands*). If you have an apple tree in the back yard that doesn't bear good fruit, the solution is not to go out and buy some shiny apples, grab your staple gun, and go staple them on all the branches. Oh sure it'd look good for a while from a distance, almost like the real thing, but eventually it will be seen for what it is. You can't fix a bad tree with a bad root by stapling on good fruit. You must get to the root cause of the problem.

Jesus said our words and behavior (Luke 6:45) comes from what's in our heart. What we say and do comes out of what we love. What we love, or treasure, is where our heart is.

### **What's this have to do with leading a Life Group?**

Tripp applies this truth to ministry saying, “Every human being is a worshiper, in active pursuit of the thing that rules his heart. This worship shapes everything we do and say, who we are, and how we live. This is why the heart is always our target in personal ministry.” *Instruments in the Redeemers Hands*, Tripp, p. 73

Tim Keller said it this way. “Whatever captures the heart's trust and love also controls the feelings and behavior. What the heart most wants the mind finds reasonable, the emotions find valuable, and the will finds doable...What makes people into what they are is the order of their loves—what they love most, more, less, and least. That is more fundamental to who you are than even the beliefs to which you mentally subscribe. Your loves show what you actually believe in, not what you say and do. People, therefore, change not by merely changing their thinking but by changing what they love most. Such a shift requires nothing less than changing your thinking, but it entails much more.” *Preaching*, Keller, p. 159.

In leading a Life Group, we must always aim to get to the heart. Our primary aim in growing spiritually is to see our own heart increasingly honest about our bad fruit and running to the gospel root. So much of helping others grow spiritually is simply inviting others into our own struggle to increasingly see our sin and to cling to our Savior. It's inviting them to join us in our own pursuit of enjoying God, feasting on his grace, and walking by his Spirit.

This is why it's so important for us to be honest and vulnerable about our own sin and struggles. It's why we must not only include teaching, but also equipping and accountability to help massage the truths of the gospel into the heart. It's why we need “life-on-life” time outside of group time so this can be caught and not just taught.

We want our hearts to be captured by the beauty of God's love for and delight in us in Christ. We want to experience wholeness and fullness of life as we abide in Christ. We want our hearts value and enjoy God more than anything else so that love for God and love for others naturally flow out of us in all of life.

**Helping others grow spiritually is inviting others to join us in that glorious pursuit.**



## General Deepest Desires:

- To be loved and accepted
- Purpose, to be part of something larger, transcendence;
- Relationship: valued, to pursue and to be pursued, to be in community or family;
- Impact, significance;
- Honor, respect valued, understood, virtuous;
- To protect and provide, to be protected and provided for, security;
- To come through: duty, honor, to hear "Well done!"
- Beauty and creativity; transcendence
- Justice, truth, and freedom;
- Peace, wholeness, completion, home, belong

*"Our wants and longings and desires are at the core of our identity, the wellspring from which our actions and behavior flow."*

*"Discipleship, we might say, is a way to curate your heart, to be attentive to and intentional about what you love."*

## Common Idols of the Heart:

### Life has meaning for me or I have self worth:

- Power Idolatry – ...if I have power and influence over others.
- Approval Idolatry – ...if I am loved and respected by others.
- Comfort Idolatry – ...if I have a particular standard or quality of life.
- Image Idolatry – ...if I have a particular look or body image.
- Control Idolatry – ...if I get mastery over my life in particular areas.
- Helping Idolatry – ...if people are dependent on me and need me.
- Dependence Idolatry – ...if someone is there to protect me.
- Independence Idolatry – ...if I am completely free from obligations or responsibilities to care for others.
- Work Idolatry – ...if I am highly productive by getting a lot accomplished. Achievement Idolatry – ...if I am being recognized for my accomplishments and excelling in life pursuits.
- Materialism Idolatry – ...if I have a certain level of wealth and nice things.
- Family Idolatry – ...if my kids and spouse are happy and especially happy with me.
- Relationship Idolatry – ...if Mr. or Miss Right is in love with me.
- Suffering Idolatry – ...I can only be happy in times when all is going well and I'm not suffering
- Pleasure Addiction – ...if I have something fun and entertaining to look forward to in the future. Religious Performance – ...if I am adhering to my religious moral codes.

*"Whatever your heart clings to and confides in, that is really your god."*

— Martin Luther

## Where to Go Looking for Idols in the Heart:

- **Daydreams** - What do I most care about?
- **Desires** - What do I most want in life?
- **Emotions** - What causes my emotions to spin out of control?
- **Anxiety** - What causes me the most anxiety?
- **Fears** - What do I most fear losing?
- **Anger** - What makes me most mad?
- **Prayers** - What do I most ask for from God?
- **Imagination** - Where do my thoughts go in solitude?
- **Spending** - What do I most spend money on?
- **Sundays** - What do I worship on the weekends?

If you seek	Your greatest nightmare	People around you often feel	Your problem emotion
<b>POWER</b> (Success, winning, influence)	Humiliation	Used	Anger
<b>APPROVAL</b> (Affirmation, love, relationships)	Rejection	Smothered	Cowardice
<b>COMFORT</b> (Privacy, lack of stress, freedom)	Stress, demands	Neglected	Boredom
<b>CONTROL</b> (Self-discipline, certainty, standards)	Uncertainty	Condemned	Worry

*Now that you've answered the questions above, look for common themes. What things tend to be too important to you? What are your idols?*

#### Confront Your Idols::

1. Name your idol(s) out loud.
2. Confess your hearts dependence on your idol(s) to God and someone else.
3. Repent, or turn away from, the idol(s) in your life.
4. Rejoice, or take joy in, the absolute certainty of Jesus' mastery of your life.
5. Replace your idol(s) with a renewed passion for the gospel of Jesus Christ.

## Appendix 9: Defining our Need for Biblical Community

Life Groups are not simply a place to learn the Bible, find friendships and mutual care. They are a place to be in relationship where we can minister to one another. Many Christians think this is reserved only for the pastor or Life Group Leader, yet Scripture wants to encourage you in your calling to be a minister to others.

1. Read the list below and name 1-2 that you most relate with.

### **7 Reasons Why We Need Life in Community (“One-Another-ing”)**

- 1) Easy to disappear safely into the crowd – (need another to challenge to grow)
- 2) Easy to listen passively to a sermon – (need another to help be a doer of the Word)
- 3) Easy to evade redemptive crises in a large group – (need another follow-up and comfort)
- 4) Easy to avoid accountability and personal application – (need another to help you change)
- 5) Easy to not understand the Bible or sermon – (need another to answer questions)
- 6) Easy to pull away when discouraged – (need another to draw you out and encourage)
- 7) Easy to avoid telling others deeper prayer requests – (need another to pray for you)

### **12 Scriptures with a Call to Minister to “One-Another”**

1. **Rom. 12:10** - Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor.
    - Love: pertaining to love or affection for those closely related to one
    - Outdo in showing honor: to do something with eagerness — (in this case, to show honor, value, or respect)
  2. **Rom. 15:14** - I myself am satisfied about you, my brothers, that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge and able to instruct one another.
    - Instruct: to provide instruction as to correct behavior and belief — ‘to instruct, to teach, instruction, teaching.’
  3. **1Cor. 12:25** - that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another.
    - Have the same care: to worry or have an anxious concern, based on apprehension about possible danger or misfortune
  4. **2Cor. 13:11** - Finally, brothers, rejoice. Aim for restoration, comfort one another, agree with one another... live in peace...
    - Restore: to make someone completely adequate, qualified or sufficient for something
    - Comfort: to cause someone to be encouraged or consoled — ‘to encourage, to console, to exhort or appeal’
    - Agree: to think or give one’s mind to, to be of the same mind
  5. **Gal. 5:13** - For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.
    - Serve: to serve, normally in a humble manner and in response to the demands or commands of others — ‘to serve.’
  6. **Gal. 6:1** - Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness... 2 Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.
- Eph. 4:2** - with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love,
- Restore: to make someone completely adequate, qualified or sufficient for something
  - Bear: to provide continuous and possibly prolonged assistance; to help by supplying the needs of someone
  - Bearing with: to be patient with, in the sense of enduring possible difficulty

- 7. Col. 3:16** - Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom...
- Teaching: to provide instruction in a formal or informal setting — ‘to teach, teaching.’
  - a) Admonish: to provide instruction as to correct behavior and belief — ‘to instruct, to teach, instruction, teaching.’
  - b) Admonish: to admonish someone for having done something wrong — ‘to admonish, to rebuke.’
- 8. 1Th. 4:18** - Therefore encourage one another with these words.
- 1Th. 5:11** - Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.
- Encourage: to cause someone to be encouraged or consoled — ‘to encourage, to console, to exhort or appeal’
  - Build up: to increase the potential of someone or something, with focus on the process involved — ‘to strengthen, to make more able, to build up.’
- Rom. 1:12** - that is, that we may be mutually encouraged by each other’s faith, both yours & mine.
- Mutually encouraged: to be encouraged at the same time with someone else — ‘to be encouraged together.’
- 9. \*Heb. 3:13** - But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called “today,” that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.
- Exhort: to cause someone to be encouraged or consoled — ‘to encourage, to console, to exhort or appeal’
- 10. Heb. 10:24-25** - And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.
- Stir up: the implication of stimulating a change in motivation or attitude — basically ‘to agitate one another’
  - Encourage: to cause someone to be encouraged or consoled — ‘to encourage, to console, to exhort or appeal’
- 11. James 5:16** - Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed.
- Confess sins: to acknowledge your sin publicly to others — ‘to admit, to confess’
  - Pray for: to speak to or to make requests of God — ‘to pray, to speak to God, to ask God for, prayer.’
- 12. \*1Pet. 4:10** - As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God’s varied grace:
- Serve: to render assistance or help by performing certain duties, often of a humble nature — ‘to serve, help’

### Application Questions:

1. Which of the above “one-another’s” do you feel you are most experiencing in relationships with other believers?
2. Which are you least experiencing? Do you have other Christians to do that with?
3. What are ways you can “minister” to “one-another” in these ways through your relationships with others in your Life Group?

\* Note: There are many more “one another” verses that describe the biblical relationships we are to be in such as Eph. 4:2, 32, “...bearing with one another in love... Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.”

## Appendix 10: 4-Week Study of an Overview of the Bible

[STILL UNFINISHED]

### **Maps:**

<https://visualunit.files.wordpress.com/2020/05/gods-big-story-bible-timeline.png>

<https://www.creativebiblestudy.com/support-files/old-testament-books-chronological.pdf>

<https://www.creativebiblestudy.com/support-files/new-testament-books-chronological.pdf>

### **Structure:**

<https://www.godsbigpicture.co.uk/watch>

- 9 videos with PDF's & discussion questions

### **Other:**

Books of Bible with one-sentence summary

<https://city.org.nz/kit/bible-overview>

The Story-Line of the Bible (Article - 7 pages)

[https://missionworldview.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/ea8a85\\_7f07978cf7244bf7a24cbcc0ba1178c7.pdf](https://missionworldview.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/ea8a85_7f07978cf7244bf7a24cbcc0ba1178c7.pdf)

Reading the Bible as One Story (Article - 9 pages)

[https://missionworldview.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/ea8a85\\_b2ec6ee9209548219dc3aca350c9a47f.pdf](https://missionworldview.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/ea8a85_b2ec6ee9209548219dc3aca350c9a47f.pdf)

The Story and Message of the Bible (Article - 10 pages)

The Story of the Bible: How the Good News About Jesus Is Essential - Keller (short)

<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/the-story-of-the-bible-how-the-good-news-about-jesus-is-essential-tim-kelle/>

Your Whole Bible Is About Jesus

<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/bible-about-jesus/>

The Bible is About Jesus

<https://www.gospelrelevance.com/2017/11/27/the-bible-is-about-jesus/>

Every Book of the Bible Is About Jesus (JD Greear)

<https://jdgreear.com/jesus-from-genesis-to-revelation/>

The Bible is About Jesus

<https://secundumscripturas.com/2012/10/19/the-bible-is-about-jesus/>

[#:~:text=The%20entire%20Bible%20points%20to,one%2C%20not%20a%20Christomonic%20one](#)

Mission as the Key to Unlocking the Grand Story of the Bible (Article - 3 pages)

[https://missionworldview.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/ea8a85\\_7454410b0ddf4f2f80127af948ba7f4e.pdf](https://missionworldview.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/ea8a85_7454410b0ddf4f2f80127af948ba7f4e.pdf)

Carson 30-min story of Bible

<https://www.desiringgod.org/interviews/an-overview-of-the-whole-bible>