

# GMBC

MAKING DISCIPLES WHO MAKE DISCIPLES  
BY LIVING LIFE TOGETHER



VINTAGE  

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FAITH

CREATED TO BEAR FRUIT

SPRING 2018  
LIFEGROUP CURRICULUM

# Content Overview

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# february

- 2 GM Kids: Barnyard Bash
  - 4 No Evening Service
  - 9-10 GM Youth: One Day Event
  - 11 201 Next Steps Class
  - 11 Lord's Supper (Evening Service)
  - 17 GM Singles: Escape Room
  - 23 Parent's Night Out
  - 24 Love and Honor Banquet
  - 25 101 Starting Point
- 

# march

- 1-4 GM Men: Walk to Emmaus
  - 2 GM Kids: Monster Bash
  - 3 GM Women: Ladies Brunch
  - 4 Lord's Supper (Evening Service)
  - 4-15 Israel Trip
  - 11 No Evening Service
  - 23 Parent's Night Out
  - 24 GM Men: Men's Breakfast
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# april

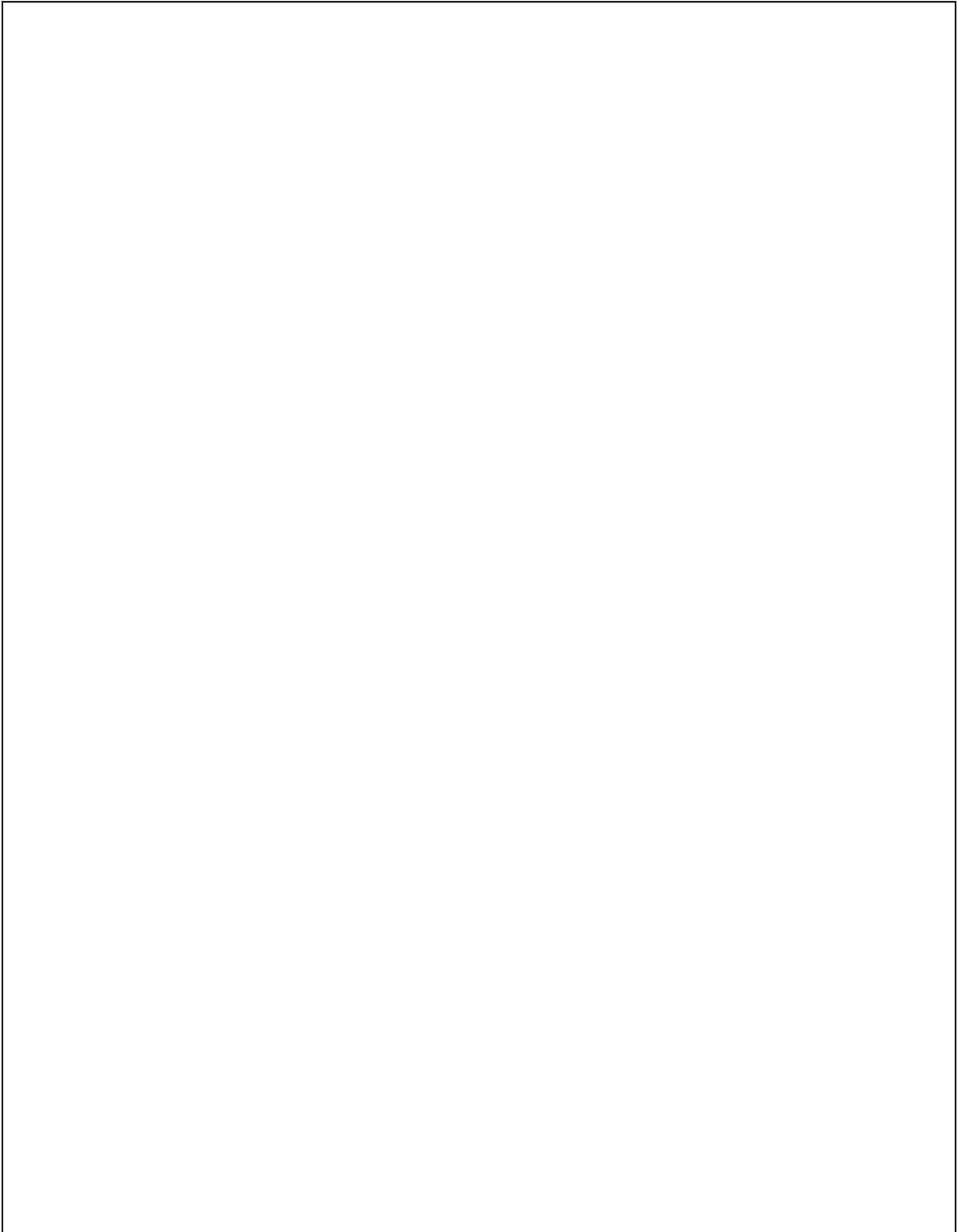
- 1 Easter
  - 2 GM Offices Closed
  - 4 GM Youth: Duct Tape War
  - 7 GM Singles: Game Night
  - 8 101 Starting Point
  - 8 GM Kids: Find Phil
  - 8 Lord's Supper (Evening Service)
  - 13-15 GM Missions: Casas Por Cristo
  - 14 GM Women: Ladies Conference
  - 27 Parent's Night Out
  - 28 GM Men: Men's Retreat
  - 29 GM Quarterly Meeting
- 

# may

- 6 Lord's Supper (Evening Service)
  - 9 Awana Awards Ceremony
  - 13 Mother's Day / No evening service
  - 15 GM Men: BYOB (Burgers, Beans, Blue Bell, etc)
  - 18 Parent's Night Out
  - 19 GM Women: Mother Daughter Tea
  - 20 Senior Sunday & Celebration
  - 27 No Evening Service
  - 28 GM Offices Closed
  - 30 GM Youth: 5th Qtr
- 

# june

- 4-8 VBS (Vacation Bible School)
  - 4-8 GM Students: The Mix
  - 10 101 Starting Point
  - 10 Lord's Supper (Evening Service)
  - 17 Father's Day / No Evening Service
  - 22 Parent's Night Out
  - 23-27 GM Youth: Summer Camp | Glorietta, NM
-



**John 15:1-8 (week 1)**

“I am the true vine, and My Father is the vineyard keeper. <sup>2</sup> Every branch in Me that does not produce fruit He removes, and He prunes every branch that produces fruit so that it will produce more fruit. <sup>3</sup> You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. <sup>4</sup> Remain in Me, and I in you. Just as a branch is unable to produce fruit by itself unless it remains on the vine, so neither can you unless you remain in Me.’

<sup>5</sup> ‘I am the vine; you are the branches. The one who remains in Me and I in him produces much fruit, because you can do nothing without Me. <sup>6</sup> If anyone does not remain in Me, he is thrown aside like a branch and he withers. They gather them, throw them into the fire, and they are burned. <sup>7</sup> If you remain in Me and My words remain in you, ask whatever you want and it will be done for you. <sup>8</sup> My Father is glorified by this: that you produce much fruit and prove to be My disciples.’”



## COMPONENTS

### WELCOME

Honoring others by welcoming & valuing them

### OPENING PRAYER

Inviting God's Holy Spirit into our presence

### PURPOSE

Remembering why we are here

### GROUND RULES

Establishing healthy boundaries for LIFE Groups

### ICEBREAKER

Setting the stage for trust, transparency and relationships

### CELEBRATION

Recognizing what God has done in our group

### TOPIC

Discussing God's Word together

### TAKEAWAY

Applying what we have learned to our lives

### CLOSING PRAYER

A time to Praise God and share our requests and needs

### PLACES TO PLAY

Allowing others to lead in LIFE Group the following week by assigning them one of the components

## GROUND RULES

CONFIDENTIALITY IS KEY

NO CROSS TALK

DON'T RESCUE

NO FIXING OTHERS

USE "I" STATEMENTS

LISTEN & PAUSE

STAY ON TOPIC

ALLOW OTHERS TO TALK

We are committed to resolving conflict biblically according to **Matthew 18**

WELCOME \_\_\_\_\_

OPENING PRAYER \_\_\_\_\_

PURPOSE (WHY ARE WE HERE?) \_\_\_\_\_

GROUND RULES \_\_\_\_\_

ICEBREAKER \_\_\_\_\_

CELEBRATION: Share how our last life group impacted your week?



## Lets get started...

Today's story starts at the heart of Jesus' final message to His disciples on the very night that He was betrayed. By the following afternoon He would be ridiculed, beaten, and crucified for the sins of all people to the end of time. Although He would breathe His last breath that day, he would soon raise to life three days later. In this lesson to His disciples, Jesus knew that every word He spoke would continue to echo in their minds and hearts for years to come. Eventually, this "death-bed conversation" would ring loudly in their ears, leading them to an entirely new way of understanding.

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In the New Testament, Jesus references vineyards a few times. Many of us didn't grow up in wine country, but a true vinedresser could tell us that there is so much depth to these analogies. First off, the actual vine is the trunk that grows straight up from the ground. The branches are what sprout from the top, sprawling in either direction along the trellis. The vinedresser's job is quite simple: making sure that his grapevine produces grapes, keeping it healthy, and protecting it from the elements. To do this, he ties the branches to the trellis for air flow, and maximum exposure to the sun. Each branch is tended to carefully so that it will bear the most fruit possible. In today's story, Jesus uses the vine as an illustration to how we are to glorify the Father.

U

*As you are listening, be thinking of areas in your life where God is working and you are bearing fruit.*



KEY VERSE

John 15:8

"My Father is glorified by this: that you produce much fruit and prove to be My disciples."

TELL THE STORY: \_\_\_\_\_

Take it back a page and tell this story from God's Word as best as you can without teaching. You don't have to memorize it word for word. Try not to express opinions or make your own points. Just tell the story.

THE VINE AND THE BRANCHES: BEARING FRUIT  
JOHN 15:1-8



For the following, use these questions or formulate your own.

SUMMARY

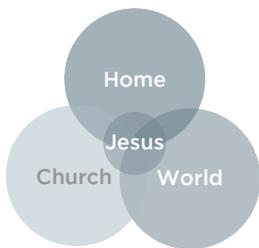
Fruits of the Spirit: Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Gentleness, and Self Control

Being good and doing right is not what gives us eternal life, but being one with and obeying Jesus, our Lord and our Savior

"It takes time and cultivation to produce fruit; a good crop doesn't come overnight."  
-Warren Wiersbe

Christ offers nourishment through His life-giving power

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What would you say is the "fruit" Jesus speaks of in this passage?



What does Jesus say we must do to produce fruit?

According to vs. 8, what happens when we "produce much fruit," and what does Jesus say that it proves?

How does this passage inspire you in your life right now?



How do you personally abide in Christ in order to bear fruit?

What is God doing in your life right now that you recognize as bearing fruit?



What will you commit to doing differently this week to ensure you're "remaining" in the Vine?

PRAYER REQUESTS:

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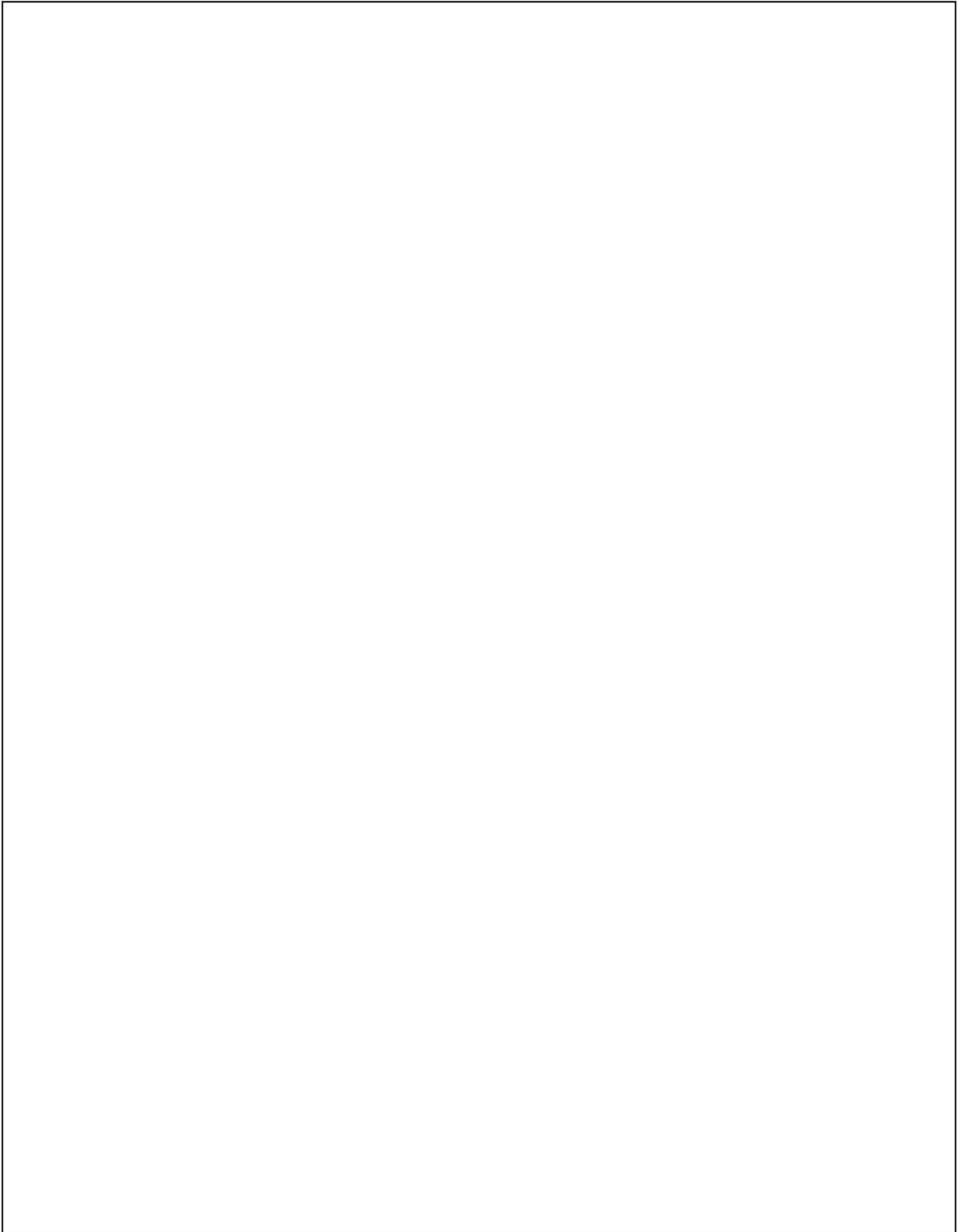
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CLOSING PRAYER: \_\_\_\_\_



REMEMBER TO GIVE OTHERS A PLACE TO PLAY NEXT LIFE GROUP



**John 15:1-8 (week 2)**

“I am the true vine, and My Father is the vineyard keeper. <sup>2</sup> Every branch in Me that does not produce fruit He removes, and He prunes every branch that produces fruit so that it will produce more fruit. <sup>3</sup> You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. <sup>4</sup> Remain in Me, and I in you. Just as a branch is unable to produce fruit by itself unless it remains on the vine, so neither can you unless you remain in Me.’

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OPENING PRAYER \_\_\_\_\_

PURPOSE (WHY ARE WE HERE?) \_\_\_\_\_

GROUND RULES \_\_\_\_\_

ICEBREAKER \_\_\_\_\_

CELEBRATION: Share how our last life group impacted your week?



## Lets get started...

Today we will be looking at the same passage as last week, John 15:1-8; however, we will be discussing it from another perspective. Jesus was always extremely intentional when He spoke to His disciples. Being with Jesus all the time, they genuinely learned from His examples on how to live according to the New Covenant. Jesus oftentimes used metaphors to help His disciples understand His instructions. This passage is no different. As branches in the Vine, we have the privilege of abiding in Him, yet He also tells us we have the responsibility of bearing fruit. In order to produce "much fruit" the vinedresser must prune the living branches, even the ones already producing fruit, so that the rest of the crop will be of higher quality.

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Last week we learned the importance of the vinedresser and part of the process in yeilding bountiful fruit for harvest. This week we are going to talk about the pruning process that is necessary to produce even more fruit. Sometimes a branch may fall to the ground and get dusty or muddy and mildew. This is when the vinedresser gently picks it up, prunes it if necessary, cleans it off, and ties it back to the trellis where it can thrive once again. Sometimes a vinedresser will see that there are branches that are producing fruit, but because he is confident in its ability to grow so much more, he will pull out his shears and begin pruning that branch so that it will bear even more fruit. For Christians, sin can be like dust, mud, and mildew, yet God is faithful to lift us up, prune us of the dirty parts, and bring us to a spot to thrive once again.

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*As you are listening today, be thinking of some areas in your life that need pruning.*



KEY VERSE

John 15:2

“Every branch in Me that does not produce fruit He removes, and He prunes every branch that produces fruit so that it will produce more fruit.”

TELL THE STORY: \_\_\_\_\_

Take it back a page and tell this story from God's Word as best as you can without teaching. You don't have to memorize it word for word. Try not to express opinions or make your own points. Just tell the story.

THE VINE AND THE BRANCHES: PRUNING  
JOHN 15:1-8



For the following, use these questions or formulate your own.

SUMMARY

Sometimes God must discipline us to strengthen our character and faith

It would be frightening for God to leave us alone and let us have our own way

God prunes us and encourages us to bear fruit for His glory solely because He loves us

Pruning is not always cutting away the bad; sometimes it's cutting away the good so that we may enjoy the best

Why does God prune the branches that bear fruit?



How does vs. 3 connect to this story?

Consequently, what happens when we do not remain in Christ?

Why is it important for God to prune you?



What are some areas in your life that need pruning?

How does the promise that God gives us in this passage encourage you?



Ask God this week to reveal to you the areas in your life that need pruning and ask someone you trust to hold you accountable in those areas.

PRAYER REQUESTS:

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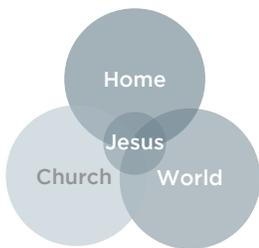
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CLOSING PRAYER: \_\_\_\_\_



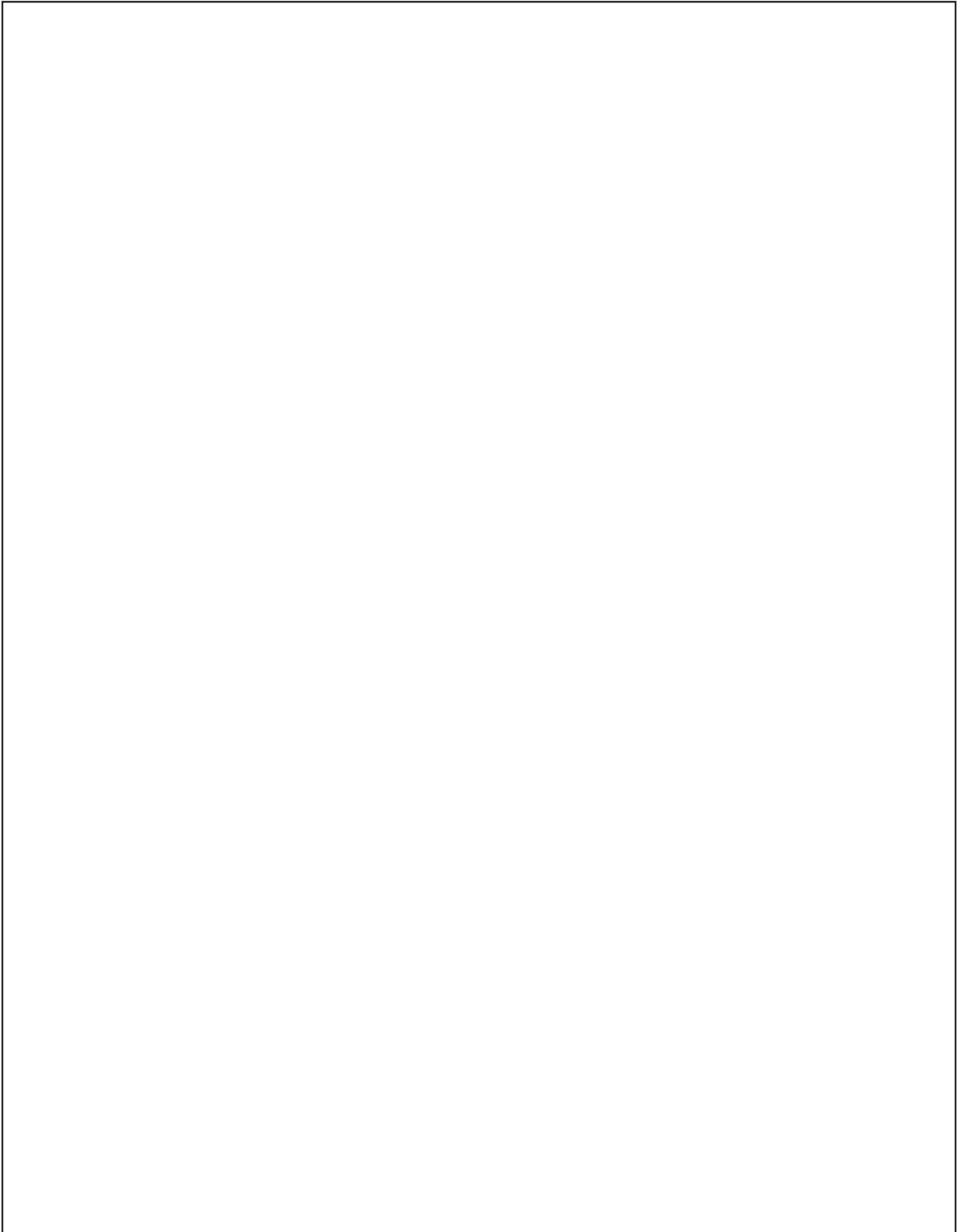
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LIFE Circles



REMEMBER TO GIVE OTHERS A PLACE TO PLAY NEXT LIFE GROUP



**John 15:9-17**

<sup>9</sup> ‘As the Father has loved me, I have also loved you. Remain in my love. <sup>10</sup> If you keep my commands you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commands and remain in his love.

<sup>11</sup> ‘I have told you these things so that my joy may be in you and your joy may be complete.

<sup>12</sup> ‘This is my command: Love one another as I have loved you. <sup>13</sup> No one has greater love than this: to lay down his life for his friends. <sup>14</sup> You are my friends if you do what I command you. <sup>15</sup> I do not call you servants anymore, because a servant doesn’t know what his master is doing. I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything I have heard from my Father. <sup>16</sup> You did not choose me, but I chose you. I appointed you to go and produce fruit and that your fruit should remain, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he will give you.

<sup>17</sup> ‘This is what I command you: Love one another.’”



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OPENING PRAYER \_\_\_\_\_

PURPOSE (WHY ARE WE HERE?) \_\_\_\_\_

GROUND RULES \_\_\_\_\_

ICEBREAKER \_\_\_\_\_

CELEBRATION: Share how our last life group impacted your week?



## Lets get started...

Jesus had been talking to his disciples about "remaining" or "abiding" in Him because He knew He must prepare them for what was to come after His departure from the earth. As a matter of fact, He used this term eleven times in John 15:1-11 in order to discuss keeping fellowship with Him and obedience to Him so that He could work in and through us to produce much fruit. Remaining in Christ demands a PowerFULL life (Prayer, Obedience, staying in the Word, Exalting the Father, Relationships with other believers and FULL dependence on the Holy Spirit).

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Many of us would say we have several acquaintances, yet we have very few close friends. We consider our closest friends those we would give up anything for. But even our closest of friends can let us down. They can be there with us in the trenches one minute and the next, not have time for us. Jesus is the truest friend we will ever have. He will never forsake us, never leave us, and is always there, even when we feel like we don't need Him or want Him there. In this passage, we will see that Jesus commands us to "love one another." But what exactly does this mean? Christ-like love is not a "feeling" but an act of the will.

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*As you are listening, compare / contrast the friendship you have with Jesus to the way you view your earthly friendships.*

KEY VERSE

John 15:13

"No one has greater love than this: to lay down his life for his friends."

TELL THE STORY: \_\_\_\_\_

Take it back a page and tell this story from God's Word as best as you can without teaching. You don't have to memorize it word for word. Try not to express opinions or make your own points. Just tell the story.

CHRIST LIKE LOVE  
JOHN 15:9-17



For the following, use these questions or formulate your own.

SUMMARY

Our obedience to God is an indicator of our love for Him

When we love one another, Christ's joy pours out of us

God chooses to love us and we, in-turn should love others

Love and obedience go together; neither can be separated from the other



What does Jesus require from us according to this passage?

What "commandments" is Jesus talking about?

What is Jesus saying in vs. 16?

How does vs. 12 impact you personally?



Since Jesus calls us His "friend," how does your friendship with Him compare to your earthly friendships?

How has good and/or bad fruit affected your personal walk with Jesus?



Think of someone in your Life Circles that Jesus is asking you to love like He loves you. How are you going to obey Jesus in this command this week?

PRAYER REQUESTS:

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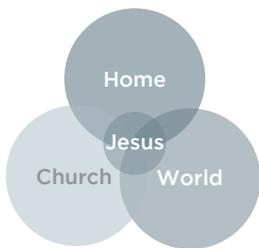
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CLOSING PRAYER: \_\_\_\_\_

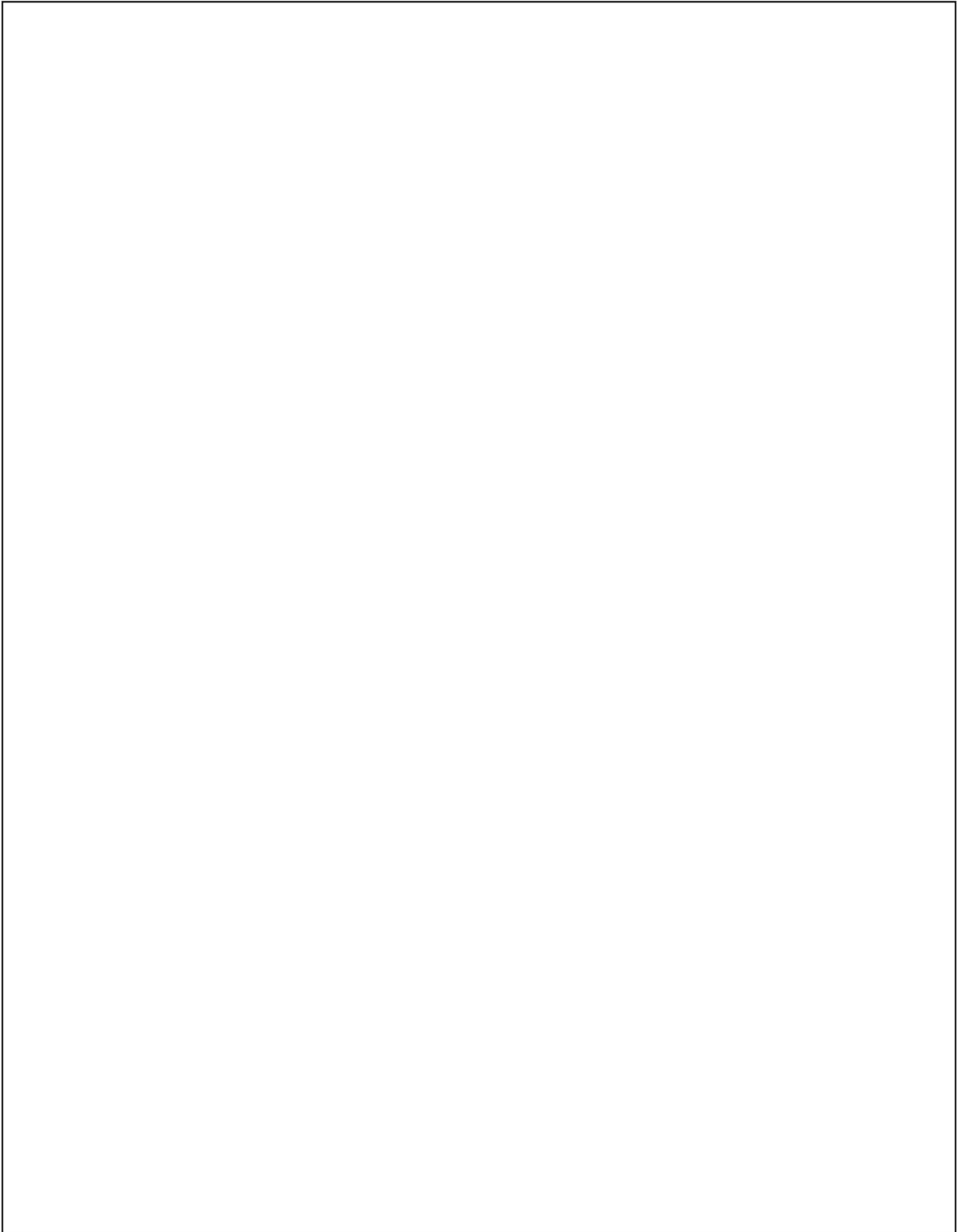
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LIFE Circles



REMEMBER TO GIVE OTHERS A PLACE TO PLAY NEXT LIFE GROUP



**John 15:18-25**

<sup>18</sup> ‘If the world hates you, understand that it hated me before it hated you. <sup>19</sup> If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own. However, because you are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of it, the world hates you. <sup>20</sup> Remember the word I spoke to you: ‘A servant is not greater than his master.’ If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you. If they kept my word, they will also keep yours. <sup>21</sup> But they will do all these things to you on account of my name, because they don’t know the one who sent me. <sup>22</sup> If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not be guilty of sin. Now they have no excuse for their sin. <sup>23</sup> The one who hates me also hates my Father. <sup>24</sup> If I had not done the works among them that no one else has done, they would not have sin. Now they have seen and hated both me and my Father. <sup>25</sup> But this happened so that the statement written in their law might be fulfilled: They hated me for no reason.’”



## COMPONENTS

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WELCOME \_\_\_\_\_

OPENING PRAYER \_\_\_\_\_

PURPOSE (WHY ARE WE HERE?) \_\_\_\_\_

GROUND RULES \_\_\_\_\_

ICEBREAKER \_\_\_\_\_

CELEBRATION: Share how our last life group impacted your week?



## Lets get started...

Jesus was talking about love and how to remain in Him, who is Love. But He had also been preparing His disciples for the upcoming persecution they would experience purely because they knew and loved Jesus and followed His commands. The religious leaders of the time were so concerned about keeping the Law that they neglected the people and the very One who made the Law. This allowed the thoughts of pride, resentment, hatred, and opposition to form against true disciples and believers of Christ.

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As believers, we face opposition from people all around us. Sometimes it even feels like those who claim to know God are the first to throw stones when we stand for what is right. It is quite comforting to hear Christ tell us that when people persecute us for His namesake, their offense is with Him and not us. Knowing about God is vastly different than knowing God. James 2:19 says, "You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that—and shudder."

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*As you are listening today, be thinking of areas of your life you feel the ways of the "world" trying to conform you.*



KEY VERSE

John 15:20

"A servant is not greater than his master. If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you. If they kept my word, they will also keep yours."

SUMMARY

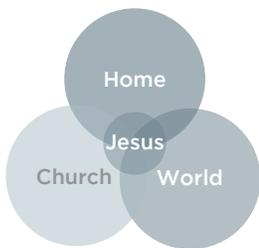
Hatred is the mark of the world, where love is the mark of a follower of Jesus Christ

A believer is out of place in this world

"Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect." 1 Pet 3:15

Knowing about God is vastly different from knowing God

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LIFE Circles

TELL THE STORY: \_\_\_\_\_

Take it back a page and tell this story from God's Word as best as you can without teaching. You don't have to memorize it word for word. Try not to express opinions or make your own points. Just tell the story.

PERSECUTIONS PREDICTED

JOHN 15:18-25



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For the following, use these questions or formulate your own.



Who is "the world" Jesus speaks of in this passage?

What is Jesus teaching His disciples in this story?

What are some marks or examples of hatred by the world?

What are some ways you have personally felt "the world" try to conform you?



How does the Holy Spirit encourage you when you are opposed by the world?

Why is it difficult to love those who persecute you?



Think of someone in your life who persecutes you or someone you love, and ask God to show you how to love them like He would.

PRAYER REQUESTS:

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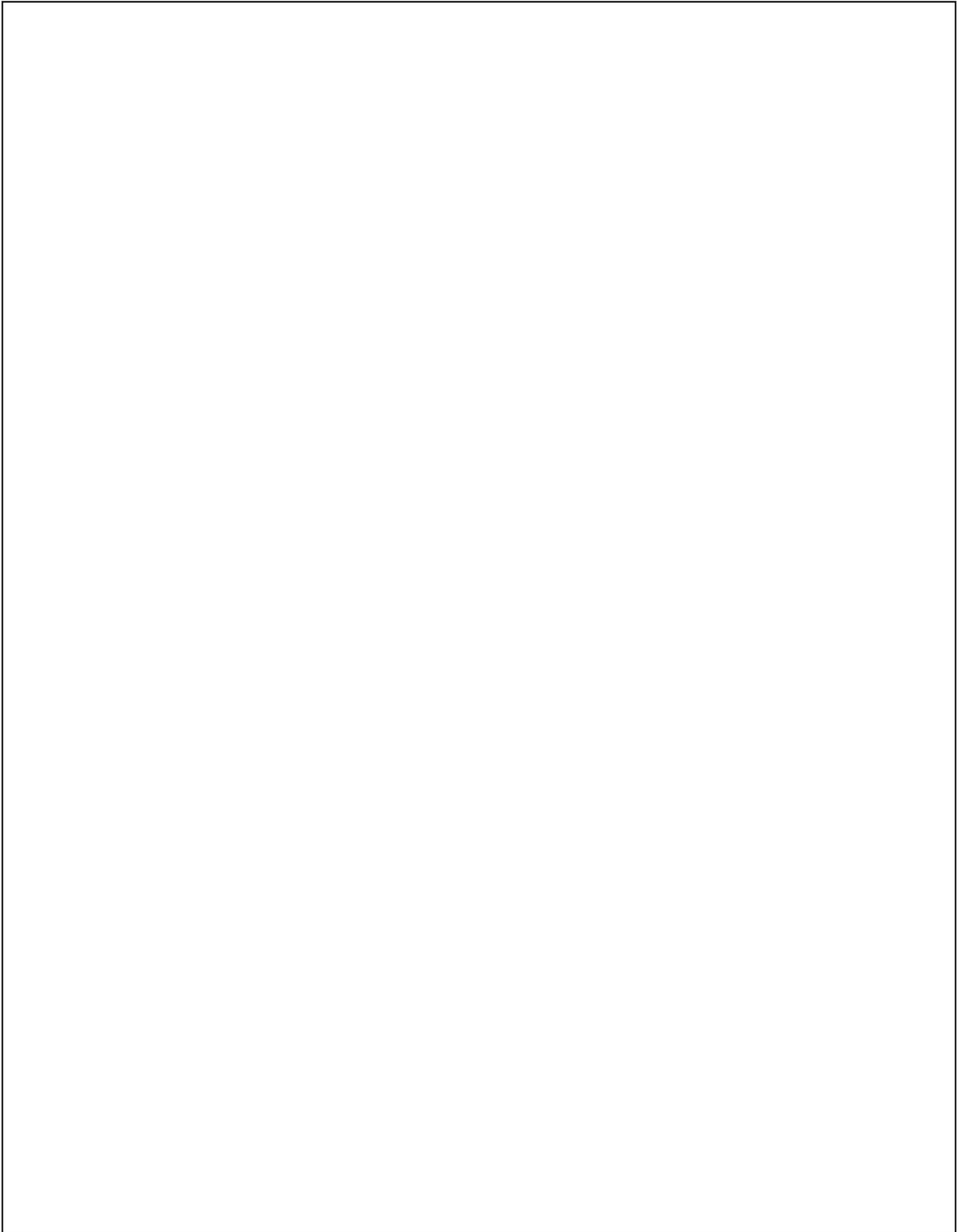
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CLOSING PRAYER: \_\_\_\_\_



REMEMBER TO GIVE OTHERS A PLACE TO PLAY NEXT LIFE GROUP



## John 14:15-26

<sup>15</sup> 'If you love me, you will keep my commands. <sup>16</sup> And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever. <sup>17</sup> He is the Spirit of truth. The world is unable to receive him because it doesn't see him or know him. But you do know him, because he remains with you and will be in you.

<sup>18</sup> 'I will not leave you as orphans; I am coming to you. <sup>19</sup> In a little while the world will no longer see me, but you will see me. Because I live, you will live too. <sup>20</sup> On that day you will know that I am in my Father, you are in me, and I am in you. <sup>21</sup> The one who has my commands and keeps them is the one who loves me. And the one who loves me will be loved by my Father. I also will love him and will reveal myself to him.'

<sup>22</sup> Judas (not Iscariot) said to him, 'Lord, how is it you're going to reveal yourself to us and not to the world?'

<sup>23</sup> Jesus answered, 'If anyone loves me, he will keep my word. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. <sup>24</sup> The one who doesn't love me will not keep my words. The word that you hear is not mine but is from the Father who sent me.

<sup>25</sup> 'I have spoken these things to you while I remain with you. <sup>26</sup> But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and remind you of everything I have told you.'



## COMPONENTS

### WELCOME

Honoring others by welcoming & valuing them

### OPENING PRAYER

Inviting God's Holy Spirit into our presence

### PURPOSE

Remembering why we are here

### GROUND RULES

Establishing healthy boundaries for LIFE Groups

### ICEBREAKER

Setting the stage for trust, transparency and relationships

### CELEBRATION

Recognizing what God has done in our group

### TOPIC

Discussing God's Word together

### TAKEAWAY

Applying what we have learned to our lives

### CLOSING PRAYER

A time to Praise God and share our requests and needs

### PLACES TO PLAY

Allowing others to lead in LIFE Group the following week by assigning them one of the components

## GROUND RULES

CONFIDENTIALITY IS KEY

NO CROSS TALK

DON'T RESCUE

NO FIXING OTHERS

USE "I" STATEMENTS

LISTEN & PAUSE

STAY ON TOPIC

ALLOW OTHERS TO TALK

We are committed to resolving conflict biblically according to **Matthew 18**

WELCOME \_\_\_\_\_

OPENING PRAYER \_\_\_\_\_

PURPOSE (WHY ARE WE HERE?) \_\_\_\_\_

GROUND RULES \_\_\_\_\_

ICEBREAKER \_\_\_\_\_

CELEBRATION: Share how our last life group impacted your week?



## Lets get started...

Jesus was preparing His disciples in various ways to become strong men of God who were committed to following Jesus' examples, being changed by His word, and fulfilling Christ's mission to make disciples of all nations. He was in his last days when He began His preparation for leaving the earth. In today's story, Jesus reveals to us His plan to stay with us even after He ascended to heaven.

H  
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Sometimes as believers, we wish we could foresee the future so that we could make plans and prepare for what is about to happen. But God has chosen not to give us this ability though He Himself knows what will happen in five minutes, five days, five years, or even 5,000 years from now. He does, however, give us the tools we need to prepare for the future. In the book of Romans we are reminded that God always works for the good in the lives of those who love Him and are called according to His purpose. As a matter fact, He lives inside of us and operates as our Counselor, Comforter, Encourager, and Advocate. His Holy Spirit is constantly with us and is always aware of what is coming up in our lives. Nothing is a surprise to Him. We don't need to know the future to trust God. But we must trust Him to have control of our future.



*As you are listening today, be thinking of ways the Holy Spirit has helped you personally when you've needed Him.*

KEY VERSE

John 14:23

“Jesus answered, ‘If anyone loves me, he will keep my word. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him.’”

SUMMARY

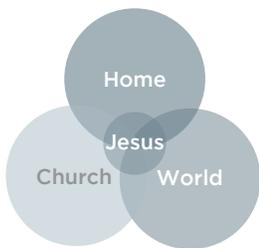
If we say we love Jesus, we must obey Him

The Holy Spirit will never lead us to do something contrary to God’s Word

Apart from God’s Holy Spirit, we cannot live the life God would have for us

The Holy Spirit doesn’t work instead or in spite of us, but in and through us

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LIFE Circles

TELL THE STORY: \_\_\_\_\_

Take it back a page and tell this story from God’s Word as best as you can without teaching. You don’t have to memorize it word for word. Try not to express opinions or make your own points. Just tell the story.

JESUS PROMISES THE HOLY SPIRIT  
JOHN 14:15-26



For the following, use these questions or formulate your own.



Who is the Counselor Jesus is speaking of?

What does Jesus promise the Counselor will do?

What does Jesus say we will do if we truly love Him?

\_\_\_\_\_



Why does Jesus emphasize the relationship between loving him and obeying Him?

In what ways would you say that you truly “know” the Father?

How has the Holy Spirit helped you personally when you’ve needed Him?

\_\_\_\_\_



How will you let the Holy Spirit guide you in obedience this week?

PRAYER REQUESTS:

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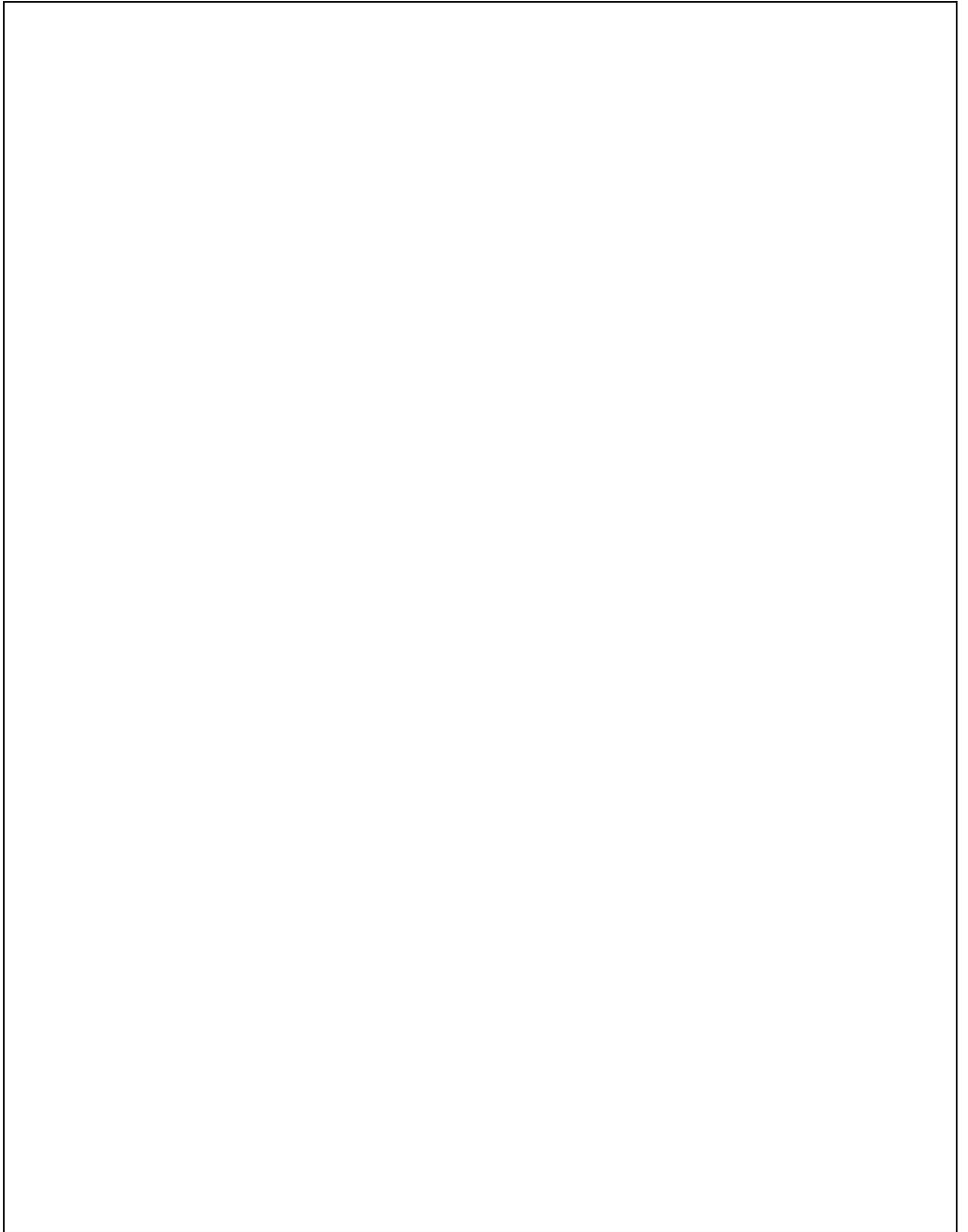
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CLOSING PRAYER: \_\_\_\_\_



REMEMBER TO GIVE OTHERS A PLACE TO PLAY NEXT LIFE GROUP



## John 15:26 - 16:15

“<sup>26</sup> ‘When the Counselor comes, the one I will send to you from the Father—the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father—he will testify about me. <sup>27</sup> You also will testify, because you have been with me from the beginning.’

**16** <sup>1</sup> ‘I have told you these things to keep you from stumbling. <sup>2</sup> They will ban you from the synagogues. In fact, a time is coming when anyone who kills you will think he is offering service to God. <sup>3</sup> They will do these things because they haven’t known the Father or me. <sup>4</sup> But I have told you these things so that when their time comes you will remember I told them to you. I didn’t tell you these things from the beginning, because I was with you. <sup>5</sup> But now I am going away to him who sent me, and not one of you asks me, ‘Where are you going?’ <sup>6</sup> Yet, because I have spoken these things to you, sorrow has filled your heart. <sup>7</sup> Nevertheless, I am telling you the truth. It is for your benefit that I go away, because if I don’t go away the Counselor will not come to you. If I go, I will send him to you. <sup>8</sup> When he comes, he will convict the world about sin, righteousness, and judgment: <sup>9</sup> About sin, because they do not believe in me; <sup>10</sup> about righteousness, because I am going to the Father and you will no longer see me; <sup>11</sup> and about judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged.’

<sup>12</sup> ‘I still have many things to tell you, but you can’t bear them now. <sup>13</sup> When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth. For he will not speak on his own, but he will speak whatever he hears. He will also declare to you what is to come. <sup>14</sup> He will glorify me, because he will take from what is mine and declare it to you. <sup>15</sup> Everything the Father has is mine. This is why I told you that he takes from what is mine and will declare it to you.’”



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PURPOSE (WHY ARE WE HERE?) \_\_\_\_\_

GROUND RULES \_\_\_\_\_

ICEBREAKER \_\_\_\_\_

CELEBRATION: Share how our last life group impacted your week?



## Lets get started...

Jesus was openly warning His disciples of the hatred and rejection that the world would have toward them because of Him. He had just a short time to forewarn them of what was about to be unleashed on those who put their trust in Christ. However, unknown to the disciples, in just a few short hours, the religious leaders of Israel would seek Him out, demanding their Messiah's blood to be spilled for crimes He never committed. In today's passage, Jesus foreshadows His plan for all believers after He left this earth to be with His Heavenly Father. He made a way for us to never be alone and to be able to withstand the trials of the world's hatred because of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

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Before diving in to today's story, we must remember who the Holy Spirit really is. The Holy Spirit God, equal with the Father and Jesus, the Son. He is present in the world to make us aware of our need for Jesus Christ. He also lives in every Christian from the moment of salvation, providing assurance, strength, and wisdom. He equips the Christian with power for living, understanding of spiritual truth, and guidance in doing what is right. He also uniquely gives each believer gifts for the building up of the Body of Christ. As believers, we must choose to live under His control, allowing Him to not only be our Savior but also our Lord.

U

*As you are listening today, be thinking of ways you are setting aside your own agenda and allowing the Holy Spirit to guide you.*



## KEY VERSE

John 16:8

“When he comes, he will convict the world about sin, righteousness, and judgment”

WEEK 6  
FEB 25 - MAR 3

TELL THE STORY: \_\_\_\_\_

Take it back a page and tell this story from God's Word as best as you can without teaching. You don't have to memorize it word for word. Try not to express opinions or make your own points. Just tell the story.

## THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT JOHN 15:26 - 16:15

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*For the following, use these questions or formulate your own.*

What role does the Holy Spirit play according to this passage?



What is Jesus' reason for leaving His disciples to be with His Heavenly Father?

What are some things Jesus speaks about when addressing non-believers in this passage?

What are some ways you personally live your life on your own, not allowing the Holy Spirit to guide you?



Share of a time when you saw God guide you through a situation that was totally out of your control.

Why can we read books/newspapers/magazines on our own but need help from God's Holy Spirit to read the Bible?



This week, choose a specific area in your life that you are trying to control and intentionally ask Him to allow the Holy Spirit to do this work in you.

PRAYER REQUESTS:

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CLOSING PRAYER: \_\_\_\_\_

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## SUMMARY

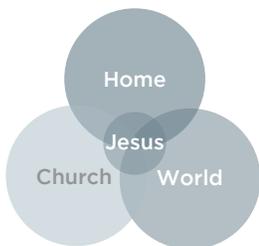
The Holy Spirit guides us, comforts us, teaches us truth, and helps us

God uses the Holy Spirit to remind us that we are never alone

According to Jesus, not believing in Him is considered a sin (Jn 16:9)

The Holy Spirit helps us to discern between right and wrong

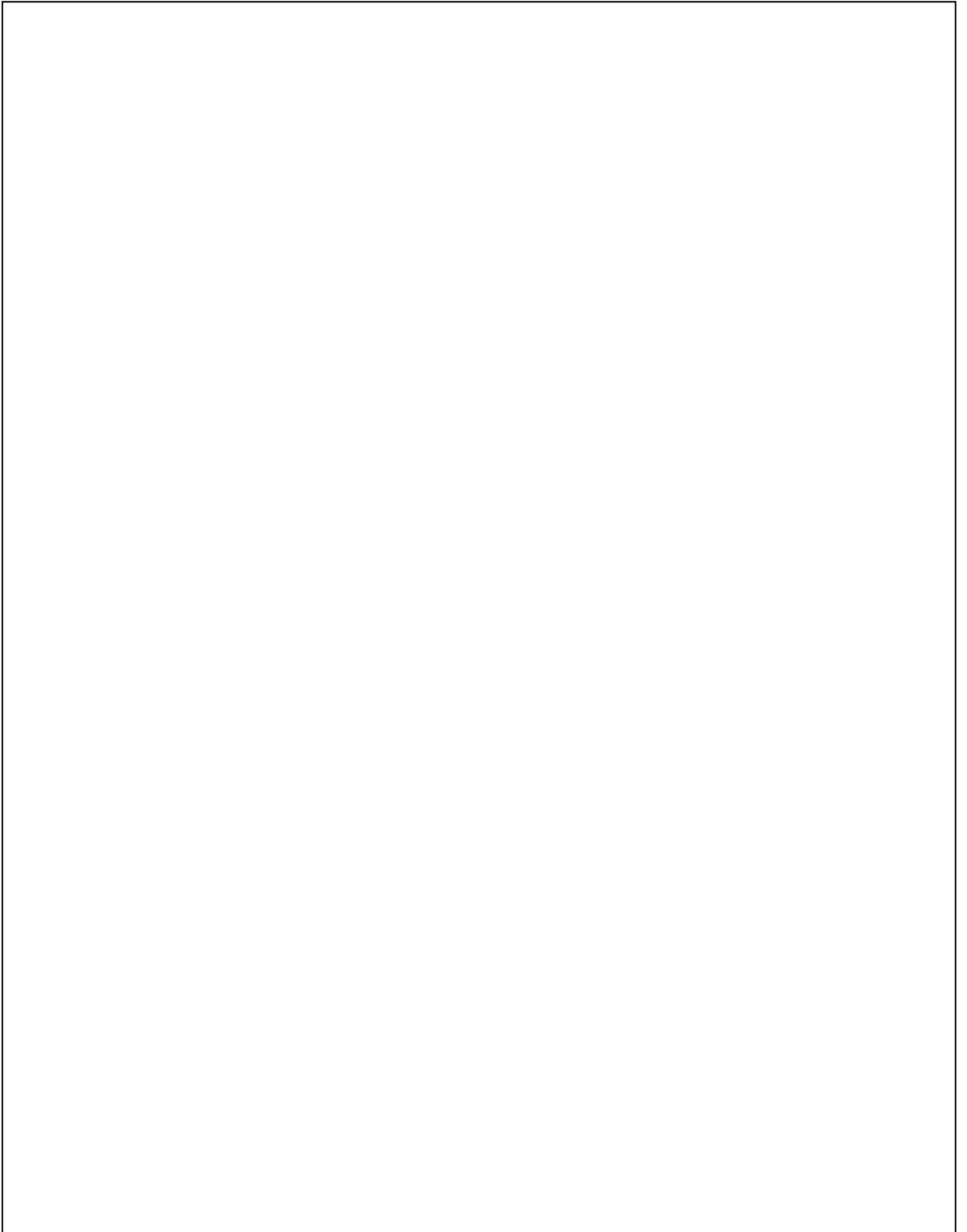
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LIFE Circles



REMEMBER TO GIVE OTHERS A PLACE TO PLAY NEXT LIFE GROUP



## **John 18:1-11**

“After Jesus had said these things, he went out with his disciples across the Kidron Valley, where there was a garden, and he and his disciples went into it. <sup>2</sup> Judas, who betrayed him, also knew the place, because Jesus often met there with his disciples. <sup>3</sup> So Judas took a company of soldiers and some officials from the chief priests and the Pharisees and came there with lanterns, torches, and weapons.

<sup>4</sup> Then Jesus, knowing everything that was about to happen to him, went out and said to them, ‘Who is it that you’re seeking?’

<sup>5</sup> ‘Jesus of Nazareth,’ they answered.

‘I am he,’ Jesus told them.

Judas, who betrayed him, was also standing with them. <sup>6</sup> When Jesus told them, ‘I am he,’ they stepped back and fell to the ground.

<sup>7</sup> Then he asked them again, ‘Who is it that you’re seeking?’

‘Jesus of Nazareth,’ they said.

<sup>8</sup> ‘I told you I am he,’ Jesus replied. ‘So if you’re looking for me, let these men go.’

<sup>9</sup> This was to fulfill the words he had said: ‘I have not lost one of those you have given me.’

<sup>10</sup> Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it, struck the high priest’s servant, and cut off his right ear. (The servant’s name was Malchus.)

<sup>11</sup> At that, Jesus said to Peter, ‘Put your sword away! Am I not to drink the cup the Father has given me?’”



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WELCOME \_\_\_\_\_

OPENING PRAYER \_\_\_\_\_

PURPOSE (WHY ARE WE HERE?) \_\_\_\_\_

GROUND RULES \_\_\_\_\_

ICEBREAKER \_\_\_\_\_

CELEBRATION: Share how our last life group impacted your week?



## Lets get started...

After Jesus had finished the last supper and His instructions to His disciples in the Upper Room, He prayed possibly the greatest prayer found in the Scriptures. Jesus was preparing Himself for the suffering He would soon endure. In this prayer, Jesus prayed for the security, joy, unity, and future glory of the disciples. He also prayed for us today so that we would know all that He's done for us and given to us, as well as what He has prepared for us in Heaven.

H.....

In today's story, we see Judas, one of the 12 disciples, betray Jesus by handing Him over to the Roman soldiers for a measly amount of earthly treasure. Judas is not an example of a believer who 'lost his salvation'; however, Judas is a prime example of an unbeliever who pretended to have salvation but was exposed in the end as a fraud. Although Judas hung out with Jesus and the disciples, he sided with the enemy on this day. He was no friend and surely not a follower of Jesus. Sometimes, people can misinterpret what faith is by spending time with believers and living like them. Some even think they have faith because of their parents' beliefs, claiming it as their own. But God's word is very clear that we must confess with our mouths Jesus is Lord and believe in our hearts God raised Him from the dead, then we will be saved. Just hanging out with Christians doesn't make us believers any more than standing in a garage makes us a car. When we don't truly know Christ, we are in danger of betraying Him.



*As you are listening, think of ways you have "pretended" to*

KEY VERSE

John 18:11

"At that, Jesus said to Peter, 'Put your sword away! Am I not to drink the cup the Father has given me?'"

TELL THE STORY: \_\_\_\_\_

Take it back a page and tell this story from God's Word as best as you can without teaching. You don't have to memorize it word for word. Try not to express opinions or make your own points. Just tell the story.

JESUS IS BETRAYED

JOHN 18:1-11



For the following, use these questions or formulate your own.

What do we learn about Jesus' character by His response to Judas and the Roman soldiers?



Discuss Peter's reaction to the betrayal and what do we learn from his response?

Why did the Roman soldiers and temple guards fall to the ground when Jesus said, "I am He"?

Think of a time in your life when you experienced betrayal. Compare/contrast your response to that of Jesus'.



In what ways have you "pretended" to follow Jesus yet stood on the side of the enemy?

Jesus fully knew all that would happen with Judas' betrayal, yet He didn't stop it. How does this story encourage you to be fully submissive and obedient to the Father?



How can you encourage someone in your Life Circles this week with this message?

PRAYER REQUESTS:

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CLOSING PRAYER: \_\_\_\_\_

SUMMARY

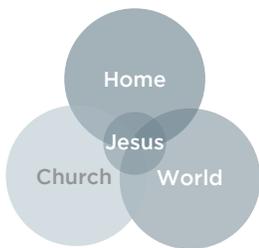
If Peter had his way, Jesus wouldn't have gone to the cross. But God had a plan to use Jesus' death, burial, & resurrection to save us all from our sin

One act of betrayal towards Jesus is when our deeds or giving are insincere

Most times, obedience and submission to Christ pull us out of our comfort zone

Jesus doesn't need us to take up our swords to defend Him

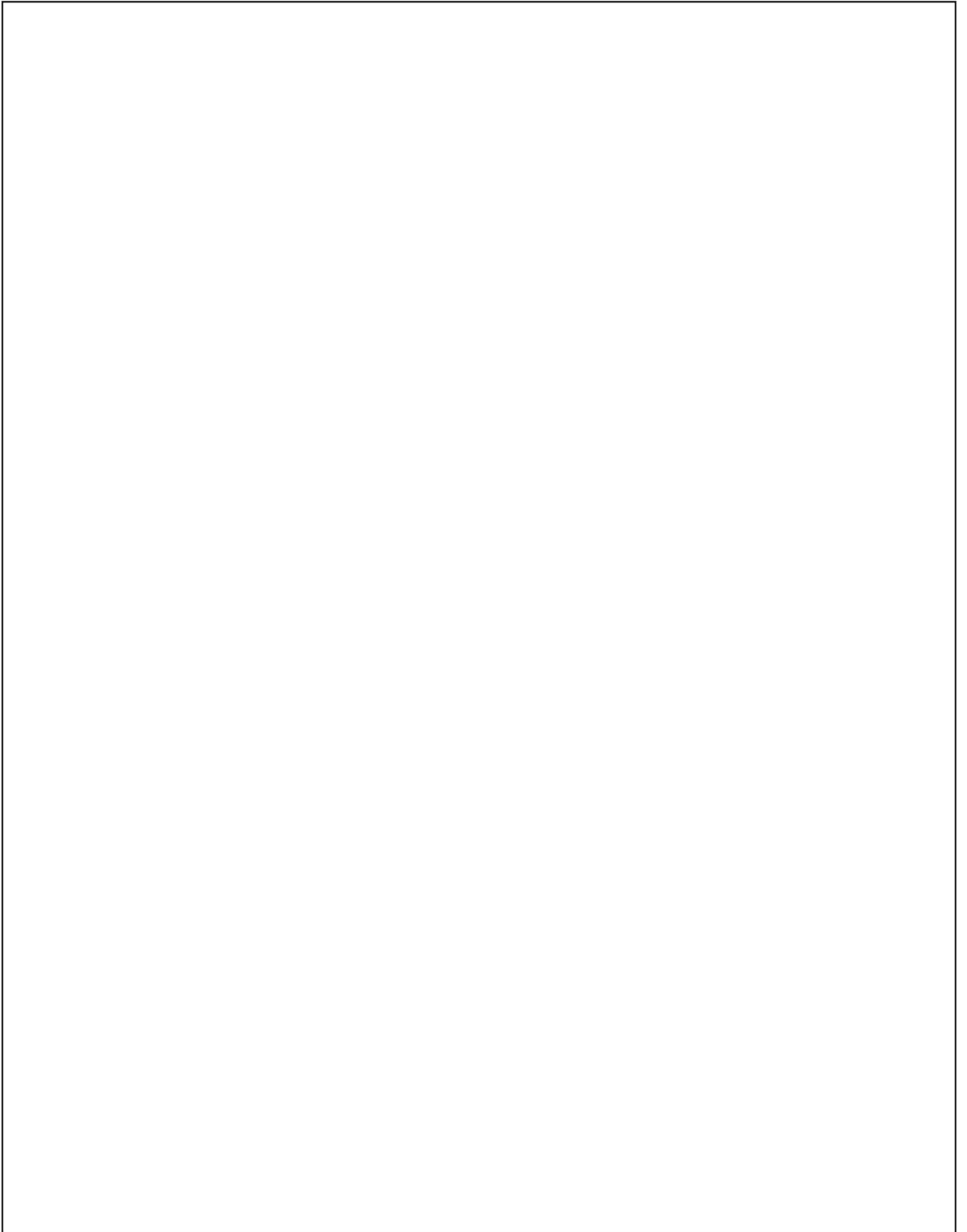
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LIFE Circles



REMEMBER TO GIVE OTHERS A PLACE TO PLAY NEXT LIFE GROUP



**John 18:15-27**

<sup>15</sup> Simon Peter was following Jesus, as was another disciple. That disciple was an acquaintance of the high priest; so he went with Jesus into the high priest's courtyard.

<sup>16</sup> But Peter remained standing outside by the door. So the other disciple, the one known to the high priest, went out and spoke to the girl who was the doorkeeper and brought Peter in.

<sup>17</sup> Then the servant girl who was the doorkeeper said to Peter, 'You aren't one of this man's disciples too, are you?'

'I am not,' he said. <sup>18</sup> Now the servants and the officials had made a charcoal fire, because it was cold. They were standing there warming themselves, and Peter was standing with them, warming himself.

<sup>19</sup> The high priest questioned Jesus about his disciples and about his teaching.

<sup>20</sup> 'I have spoken openly to the world,' Jesus answered him. 'I have always taught in the synagogue and in the temple, where all the Jews congregate, and I haven't spoken anything in secret. <sup>21</sup> Why do you question me? Question those who heard what I told them. Look, they know what I said.'

<sup>22</sup> When he had said these things, one of the officials standing by slapped Jesus, saying, 'Is this the way you answer the high priest?'

<sup>23</sup> 'If I have spoken wrongly,' Jesus answered him, 'give evidence about the wrong; but if rightly, why do you hit me?' <sup>24</sup> Then Annas sent him bound to Caiaphas the high priest.

<sup>25</sup> Now Simon Peter was standing and warming himself. They said to him, 'You aren't one of his disciples too, are you?'

He denied it and said, 'I am not.'

<sup>26</sup> One of the high priest's servants, a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, said, 'Didn't I see you with him in the garden?' <sup>27</sup> Peter denied it again. Immediately a rooster crowed."



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OPENING PRAYER \_\_\_\_\_

PURPOSE (WHY ARE WE HERE?) \_\_\_\_\_

GROUND RULES \_\_\_\_\_

ICEBREAKER \_\_\_\_\_

CELEBRATION: Share how our last life group impacted your week?



## Lets get started...

Last week we talked about Judas, one of Jesus' disciples, betraying Him in the garden of Gethsemane, handing Him over to the Roman soldiers and temple guards for thirty pieces of silver. This week we see Jesus' disciples began to abandon and deny Him. Suddenly He became wedged between hostile Roman soldiers and jealous, scheming religious leaders in the absence of His followers. As they took Jesus into custody, His disciples ran away in fear, yet Peter and John followed as Jesus was led to the high priest. Peter had to wait outside, yet John was allowed to go in with them while the high priest determined Jesus' fate.

H  
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Each one of us at some point in our lives will make bad choices, stumble, and/or fail. God's Word is clear in that His grace is abundant with our humble and repentant hearts. But when the going gets tough, it sometimes feels like all we ever heard and know about Jesus slips our minds, and we go in to "self-protect mode." When we come under persecution, whether in passing conversation or dileberant inflections of torment, we tend to revert to doing what is best for us at that time to protect ourselves from further mistreatment. As a follower of Christ, we must constantly recognize our blindspots, weaknesses, and failures so that when we come under fire from the enemy, we are armed with God's Word and stand strong for our faith in Him.

U

*As you are listening today, be thinking of pressures in your life that cause you to be tempted to deny Christ.*



KEY VERSE

Luke 22:61-62

"Then the Lord turned and looked at Peter. So Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said to him, 'Before the rooster crows today, you will deny me three times.' And he went outside and wept bitterly."

SUMMARY

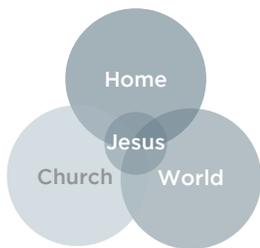
God's faithfulness prevails even in our unfaithfulness

Christ can fully use those who recognize their failure

Better to be a follower who sometimes fails than one who fails to follow

We must be aware of our own weakness in order to keep from denying Jesus when times get tough

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LIFE Circles

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PETER DENIES JESUS

JOHN 18:15-27



For the following, use these questions or formulate your own.

What differences do we see in this passage about Peter's denial of Jesus vs. last week's lesson of Judas betraying Jesus?



What do we learn about Jesus in this passage?

Why was Peter trying to disassociate himself from Christ?

How do you personally relate to this story?



What are some pressures in your life that tempt you to deny Jesus?

What are ways you like to be encouraged when the heat of the world is on you?



How has this passage encouraged you to live differently this week?

PRAYER REQUESTS:

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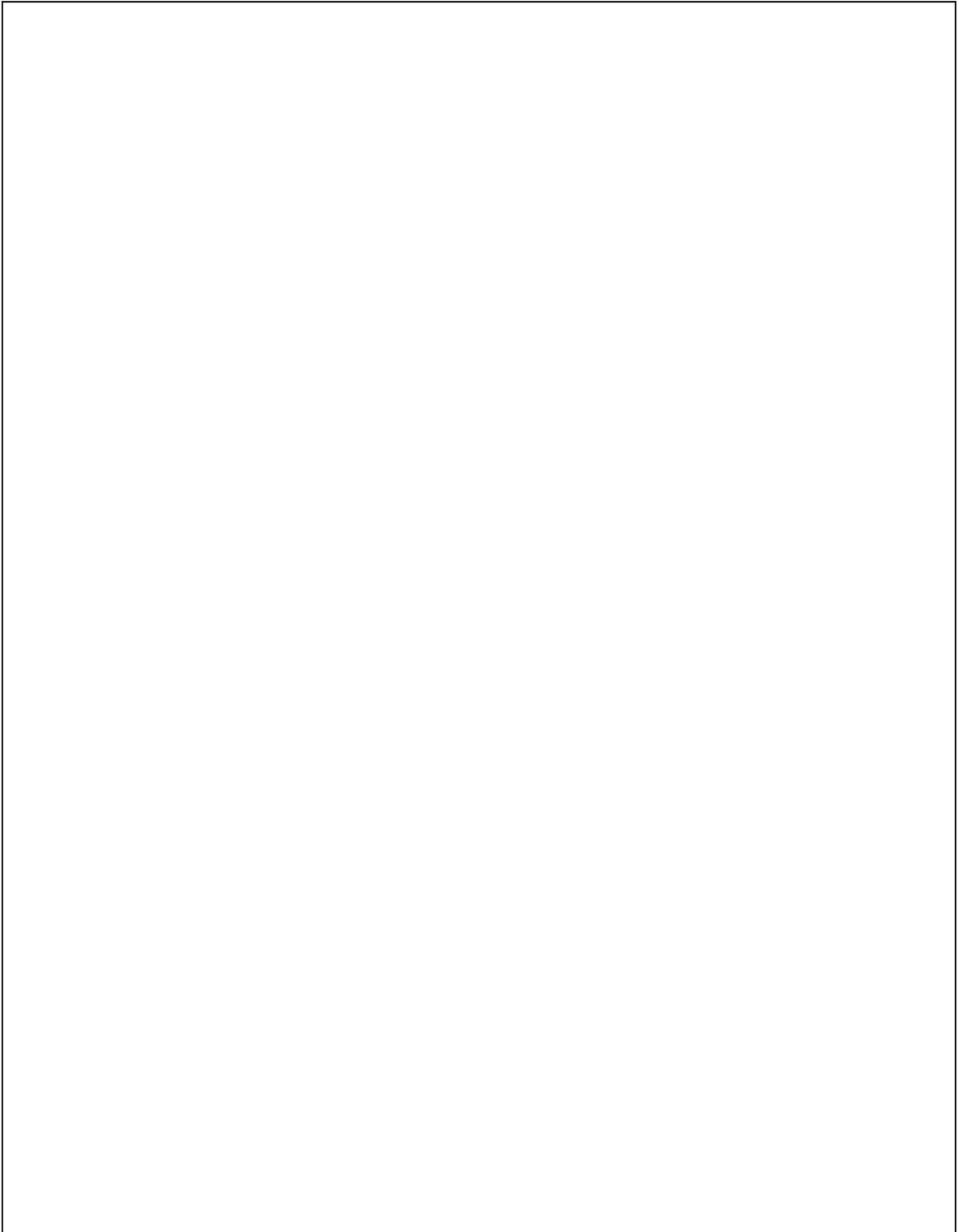
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CLOSING PRAYER: \_\_\_\_\_



REMEMBER TO GIVE OTHERS A PLACE TO PLAY NEXT LIFE GROUP



**John 18:28-40**

<sup>28</sup> Then they led Jesus from Caiaphas to the governor's headquarters. It was early morning. They did not enter the headquarters themselves; otherwise they would be defiled and unable to eat the Passover.

<sup>29</sup> So Pilate came out to them and said, 'What charge do you bring against this man?'

<sup>30</sup> They answered him, 'If this man weren't a criminal, we wouldn't have handed him over to you.'

<sup>31</sup> Pilate told them, 'You take him and judge him according to your law.'

'It's not legal for us to put anyone to death,' the Jews declared. <sup>32</sup> They said this so that Jesus's words might be fulfilled indicating what kind of death he was going to die.

<sup>33</sup> Then Pilate went back into the headquarters, summoned Jesus, and said to him, 'Are you the King of the Jews?'

<sup>34</sup> Jesus answered, 'Are you asking this on your own, or have others told you about me?'

<sup>35</sup> 'I'm not a Jew, am I?' Pilate replied. 'Your own nation and the chief priests handed you over to me. What have you done?'

<sup>36</sup> 'My kingdom is not of this world,' said Jesus. 'If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would fight, so that I wouldn't be handed over to the Jews. But as it is, my kingdom is not from here.'

<sup>37</sup> 'You are a king then?' Pilate asked.

'You say that I'm a king,' Jesus replied. 'I was born for this, and I have come into the world for this: to testify to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice.'

<sup>38</sup> 'What is truth?' said Pilate.

After he had said this, he went out to the Jews again and told them, 'I find no grounds for charging him. <sup>39</sup> You have a custom that I release one prisoner to you at the Passover. So, do you want me to release to you the King of the Jews?'

<sup>40</sup> They shouted back, 'Not this man, but Barabbas!' Now Barabbas was a revolutionary."



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PURPOSE (WHY ARE WE HERE?) \_\_\_\_\_

GROUND RULES \_\_\_\_\_

ICEBREAKER \_\_\_\_\_

CELEBRATION: Share how our last life group impacted your week?



## Lets get started...

The Jewish council didn't have the authority to execute prisoners, so upon Judas' betrayal, Jesus had to be arrested by the Roman soldiers. Prior to appearing before the Roman governor, Pontius Pilate, Jesus was taken to Annas, the father-in-law of Caiaphas, the high priest. Then, He stood before Caiaphas himself. They sent Him to Pilate, who found Him without guilt. So Jesus was sent to Herod, a part-Jewish leader over Galilee and Perea (same Herod who had Jesus' cousin, John the Baptist, beheaded). Like Pilate, he found Jesus not guilty. So He was brought before Pilate a second time to make a final decision on His fate. This is where we begin today's story.

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From the time we are young, we have a tendency to be controlled by the opinions of others. Our self-worth seems to come from what others say to or about us. When we come under pressure, we oftentimes will choose the path of least resistance in order to please everybody. But most of the time, we find that this response creates more problems in the long run. The truth is that we are worth so much to God that He laid His life down for us, literally. God is a God of freedom from our guilt, shame, condemnation, and fear of man. In today's story, we will see a man of high power make a decision to please people in order to keep his job instead of doing what he knew to be right.

U

*As you are listening, think of how your fears of rejection affect you.*



KEY VERSE

John 18:37b

“You say that I’m a king,  
Jesus replied. ‘I was born  
for this, and I have come  
into the world for this: to  
testify to the truth. Every-  
one who is of the truth  
listens to my voice.”

SUMMARY

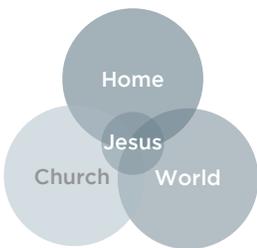
*Diety:* Sinless, divine, holy,  
whose name is sacred  
and to be revered.

Washing your hands  
of a situation doesn’t  
erase your guilt; it only  
gives you a temporary  
sense of peace

Doing what is right  
is not always the  
popular decision

Jesus had to go through  
all He went through in  
order to fulfill prophesy  
and so we could be saved

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LIFE Circles

TELL THE STORY: \_\_\_\_\_

Take it back a page and tell this story from God's Word as best as you can without teaching. You don't have to memorize it word for word. Try not to express opinions or make your own points. Just tell the story.

JESUS STANDS TRIAL  
JOHN 18:28-40



For the following, use these questions or formulate your own.

What proof did the religious leaders have against Jesus?



What do we learn about the deity, or divine nature of Jesus?

What does Jesus mean when He says, "I was born for this?"

Share of a time when you "washed your hands" of or gave into a situation instead of standing up for what is right?  
What was the outcome?



In what ways has your self pride or fear of peoples opinions lead you to trying to please everybody?

How does the fear of man and rejection affect you in your life?



How can you use this story to be encouraged, or encourage someone else in your Life Circles this week?



PRAYER REQUESTS:

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CLOSING PRAYER: \_\_\_\_\_



REMEMBER TO GIVE OTHERS A PLACE TO PLAY NEXT LIFE GROUP

## John 19:17-42

<sup>17</sup> Carrying the cross by himself, he went out to what is called Place of the Skull, which in Aramaic is called Golgotha. <sup>18</sup> There they crucified him and two others with him, one on either side, with Jesus in the middle. <sup>19</sup> Pilate also had a sign made and put on the cross. It said: Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews. <sup>20</sup> Many of the Jews read this sign, because the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city, and it was written in Aramaic, Latin, and Greek. <sup>21</sup> So the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, 'Don't write, 'The King of the Jews,' but that he said, 'I am the King of the Jews.'

<sup>22</sup> Pilate replied, 'What I have written, I have written.'

<sup>23</sup> When the soldiers crucified Jesus, they took his clothes and divided them into four parts, a part for each soldier. They also took the tunic, which was seamless, woven in one piece from the top. <sup>24</sup> So they said to one another, 'Let's not tear it, but cast lots for it, to see who gets it.' This happened that the Scripture might be fulfilled that says: They divided my clothes among themselves, and they cast lots for my clothing. This is what the soldiers did.

<sup>25</sup> Standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother, his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. <sup>26</sup> When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple he loved standing there, he said to his mother, 'Woman, here is your son.' <sup>27</sup> Then he said to the disciple, 'Here is your mother.' And from that hour the disciple took her into his home.

<sup>28</sup> After this, when Jesus knew that everything was now finished that the Scripture might be fulfilled, he said, 'I'm thirsty.' <sup>29</sup> A jar full of sour wine was sitting there; so they fixed a sponge full of sour wine on a hyssop branch and held it up to his mouth.

<sup>30</sup> When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, 'It is finished.' Then bowing his head, he gave up his spirit.

<sup>31</sup> Since it was the preparation day, the Jews did not want the bodies to remain on the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a special day). They requested that

Pilate have the men's legs broken and that their bodies be taken away.

<sup>32</sup> So the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first man and of the other one who had been crucified with him. <sup>33</sup> When they came to Jesus, they did not break his legs since they saw that he was already dead. <sup>34</sup> But one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once blood and water came out. <sup>35</sup> He who saw this has testified so that you also may believe. His testimony is true, and he knows he is telling the truth. <sup>36</sup> For these things happened so that the Scripture would be fulfilled: Not one of his bones will be broken. <sup>37</sup> Also, another Scripture says: They will look at the one they pierced.

<sup>38</sup> After this, Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus—but secretly because of his fear of the Jews—asked Pilate that he might remove Jesus's body. Pilate gave him permission; so he came and took his body away. <sup>39</sup> Nicodemus (who had previously come to him at night) also came, bringing a mixture of about seventy-five pounds of myrrh and aloes. <sup>40</sup> They took Jesus's body and wrapped it in linen cloths with the fragrant spices, according to the burial custom of the Jews. <sup>41</sup> There was a garden in the place where he was crucified. A new tomb was in the garden; no one had yet been placed in it. <sup>42</sup> They placed Jesus there because of the Jewish day of preparation and since the tomb was nearby.”



## COMPONENTS

### WELCOME

Honoring others by welcoming & valuing them

### OPENING PRAYER

Inviting God's Holy Spirit into our presence

### PURPOSE

Remembering why we are here

### GROUND RULES

Establishing healthy boundaries for LIFE Groups

### ICEBREAKER

Setting the stage for trust, transparency and relationships

### CELEBRATION

Recognizing what God has done in our group

### TOPIC

Discussing God's Word together

### TAKEAWAY

Applying what we have learned to our lives

### CLOSING PRAYER

A time to Praise God and share our requests and needs

### PLACES TO PLAY

Allowing others to lead in LIFE Group the following week by assigning them one of the components

## GROUND RULES

CONFIDENTIALITY IS KEY

NO CROSS TALK

DON'T RESCUE

NO FIXING OTHERS

USE "I" STATEMENTS

LISTEN & PAUSE

STAY ON TOPIC

ALLOW OTHERS TO TALK

We are committed to resolving conflict biblically according to **Matthew 18**

WELCOME \_\_\_\_\_

OPENING PRAYER \_\_\_\_\_

PURPOSE (WHY ARE WE HERE?) \_\_\_\_\_

GROUND RULES \_\_\_\_\_

ICEBREAKER \_\_\_\_\_

CELEBRATION: Share how our last life group impacted your week?



## Lets get started...

In those days, it was customary for the Roman official in charge to release one prisoner each year at Passover. Herod, the ruler of Galilee, and Pontius Pilate, the Roman official, saw no fault in Jesus. Yet the crowd demanded that Barabbas, who was ironically guilty of the very crime that Jesus was innocent yet accused of, be released and Jesus be crucified. Jesus was taken by the Roman soldiers and flogged up to 40 times with a lead tipped whip, knotted and weighted with shards of metal and/or bone. Often prisoners would not survive this type of beating as it exposed muscle and bone; yet, Christ's torture was not over. The soldiers mocked Him, slapped Him, beat Him with a rod, spat on Him, and put a robe on His mutilated body and a crown of thorns on His head. Then they made Him carry His own cross to the hillside where He was stripped and hung on it to die.

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Martin Luther once stated the importance of preaching the Gospel to ourselves daily. As believers, we tend to forget the torture and torment our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, endured willingly. He didn't want to be crucified, even pleading with His heavenly Father to take this cup of suffering from Him if it were possible. However, He wanted the Father's will to be done and not His own. He knew the suffering He would endure for the sole purpose of making propitiation (or reconciliation) for the sins of the people, even to this day.

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*As you are listening today, be thinking of who you relate to most in the story and why.*

KEY VERSE

John 19:30

"... He said, 'It is finished.' Then bowing His head, He gave up His spirit."

TELL THE STORY: \_\_\_\_\_

Take it back a page and tell this story from God's Word as best as you can without teaching. You don't have to memorize it word for word. Try not to express opinions or make your own points. Just tell the story.

JESUS IS CRUCIFIED

JOHN 19:17-42



For the following, use these questions or formulate your own.

In verse 35, we see that John was an eyewitness to this account. Why is this so important?



What do we learn about Jesus by the words He spoke while on the cross?

What's the importance of Jesus dying on the cross and being buried in the tomb?

Why did Jesus die on the cross, and why is it important to you personally?



What part of this story stands out most to you and why?

Who do you relate to most in this story and why?



Take advantage of the opportunities that the Holy Spirit presents this week. Share with those who need to hear that Jesus died for them.

PRAYER REQUESTS:

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CLOSING PRAYER: \_\_\_\_\_



SUMMARY

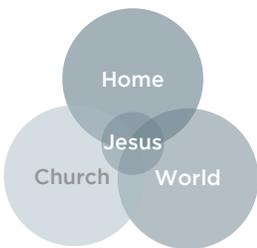
Jesus freely offered His life, taking on all the sin of the world, enduring God's judgement and death

Because Jesus is sinless, He is the only way to bridge the gap between a sinless God and sinful people such as ourselves

Jesus, the Lamb of God, was the perfect sacrifice for the sins of the world

Jesus came to finish God's work of Salvation, paying the full penalty for our sins

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LIFE Circles



REMEMBER TO GIVE OTHERS A PLACE TO PLAY NEXT LIFE GROUP

## John 20:1-18

“On the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early, while it was still dark. She saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. <sup>2</sup> So she went running to Simon Peter and to the other disciple, the one Jesus loved, and said to them, ‘They’ve taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we don’t know where they’ve put him!’

<sup>3</sup> At that, Peter and the other disciple went out, heading for the tomb. <sup>4</sup> The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and got to the tomb first. <sup>5</sup> Stooping down, he saw the linen cloths lying there, but he did not go in.

<sup>6</sup> Then, following him, Simon Peter also came. He entered the tomb and saw the linen cloths lying there. <sup>7</sup> The wrapping that had been on his head was not lying with the linen cloths but was folded up in a separate place by itself. <sup>8</sup> The other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, then also went in, saw, and believed. <sup>9</sup> For they did not yet understand the Scripture that he must rise from the dead. <sup>10</sup> Then the disciples returned to the place where they were staying.

<sup>11</sup> But Mary stood outside the tomb, crying. As she was crying, she stooped to look into the tomb. <sup>12</sup> She saw two angels in white sitting where Jesus’s body had been lying, one at the head and the other at the feet. <sup>13</sup> They said to her, ‘Woman, why are you crying?’

‘Because they’ve taken away my Lord,’ she told them, ‘and I don’t know where they’ve put him.’

<sup>14</sup> Having said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know it was Jesus. <sup>15</sup> ‘Woman,’ Jesus said to her, ‘why are you crying? Who is it that you’re seeking?’

Supposing he was the gardener, she replied, ‘Sir, if you’ve carried him away, tell me where you’ve put him, and I will take him away.’

<sup>16</sup> Jesus said to her, ‘Mary.’

Turning around, she said to him in Aramaic, ‘Rabboni!’—which means ‘Teacher.’

<sup>17</sup> 'Don't cling to me,' Jesus told her, 'since I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and tell them that I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'

<sup>18</sup> Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, 'I have seen the Lord!' And she told them what he had said to her."



## COMPONENTS

### WELCOME

Honoring others by welcoming & valuing them

### OPENING PRAYER

Inviting God's Holy Spirit into our presence

### PURPOSE

Remembering why we are here

### GROUND RULES

Establishing healthy boundaries for LIFE Groups

### ICEBREAKER

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### CELEBRATION

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### TAKEAWAY

Applying what we have learned to our lives

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Allowing others to lead in LIFE Group the following week by assigning them one of the components

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LISTEN & PAUSE

STAY ON TOPIC

ALLOW OTHERS TO TALK

We are committed to resolving conflict biblically according to **Matthew 18**

WELCOME \_\_\_\_\_

OPENING PRAYER \_\_\_\_\_

PURPOSE (WHY ARE WE HERE?) \_\_\_\_\_

GROUND RULES \_\_\_\_\_

ICEBREAKER \_\_\_\_\_

CELEBRATION: Share how our last life group impacted your week?



## Lets get started...

In the Old Testament, perfect and spotless lambs had to be sacrificed to atone for human sin. Now we fast forward to the New Testament where Jesus, the Lamb of God, willingly shed His own blood as a final sacrifice, taking away the sins of the world. As we read in last week's story, Jesus had just been brutally beaten and crucified on a cross, fulfilling multiple prophecies from the Old Testament. His body was mutilated yet not a bone was broken. After His death, He was taken to a tomb where He laid behind a large stone guarded by Roman soldiers.

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Today's story is unique and unlike any other. Typically when we pick up a biography and read it through, the end of the story comes at no surprise with death and burial. But Jesus' story isn't finished at death. Being fully God and fully man, He continued with a miracle of resurrection from the dead three days after His burial. This true historical event is the climax of the gospel message and an essential doctrine in the Christian faith. It has even been proven by non-Christian historians and eyewitnesses that all the events in the New Testament about Jesus' resurrection are true. The empty tomb is God's voucher to us that the full debt of our sins and the sins of the world have been paid.

U

*As you are listening today, be thinking of ways that the risen Lord has transformed your life.*



## KEY VERSE

Matthew 28:6

“He is not here.  
For he has risen,  
just as he said.  
Come and see the  
place where he lay.”

## SUMMARY

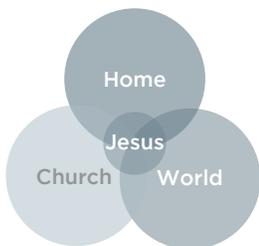
Jesus is always near  
to us and calls us  
by name

Acknowledging Christ  
is indeed alive and His  
tomb is empty is essential  
in knowing Him

When we're preoccupied with  
our own grief and doubt,  
we can miss the presence  
of Jesus in our lives

When we doubt or have  
questions, we can look to  
God's Word for answers

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LIFE Circles

WEEK 11  
APR 1 - 7

TELL THE STORY: \_\_\_\_\_

Take it back a page and tell this story from God's Word as best as you can without teaching. You don't have to memorize it word for word. Try not to express opinions or make your own points. Just tell the story.

## JESUS RAISES FROM THE DEAD

JOHJN 20:1-18

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*For the following, use these questions or formulate your own.*

What do we learn about the people in this story based on the experiences at the tomb and encounter with the risen Christ?



What are some transformations taking place in this passage?

What is the importance in Jesus raising from the dead?

What are some ways grief and doubt get in the way of God working in and around you?



What are some ways that the risen Lord has transformed your life?

Why is it difficult to grasp knowing that Jesus was brutally beaten, hung on a cross, buried and raised to life again just for you?



In what ways can you show and tell others about the miracle of being set free by Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection?

PRAYER REQUESTS:

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CLOSING PRAYER: \_\_\_\_\_

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REMEMBER TO GIVE OTHERS A PLACE TO PLAY NEXT LIFE GROUP



## ICEBREAKER QUESTION IDEAS: (QUICK ONES ARE IN BOLD)

1. If you could be a fly on a wall, where would you most want to be?
2. **What is your favorite soda?**
3. What was it like the first time I spoke in public?
4. **If you were a magazine, which one would you be?**
5. **If you could be a fictitious superhero, who would you be? Or what super power would you most want?**
6. Greatest peer pressure as an adult?
7. Where do you feel closest to God?
8. **What is your favorite music genre?**
9. How do you react when people sing "Happy Birthday" to you in a restaurant?
10. When did you last sing to yourself? To someone else?
11. **Who is your favorite singer?**
12. **What is your favorite musical instrument?**
13. What is at the top of your bucket list?
14. What is usually the first thing that comes to your mind when you think about God?
15. How would you describe God to a child?
16. What color best describes you and why?
17. What was the high point of last week? The low point?
18. **What one word would be your theme for the year?**
19. Name one person who has had the biggest impact in your life and why?
20. If I knew I had only one year to live, I would spend it...
21. **If I could visit any place in the world, it would be...**
22. If I had a million dollars to spend for the benefit of mankind...
23. The thing that causes me the greatest satisfaction is...
24. Wallet/Purse scavenger hunt: The most worthless item? - The most priceless item? - The most revealing item? - The most memorable item? - etc.
25. What is your favorite memory as a child?
26. Share something you fear.
27. How old were you when you learned to ride a bike, what was that experience like?
28. When in your life, if ever, did God become more than a word to you?
29. What's your most embarrassing moment?
30. Describe an experience when the Holy Spirit has been your comforter.
31. When was the first time you became aware that God loves you?
32. What are your strongest convictions about God?
33. **If you could hear God say one thing to you, what would that be?**
34. **If you could see God standing in front of you, what one thing would you most want to say to Him?**
35. **What single question would you most want God to answer for you if He would?**
36. Describe the person you have known whom you felt knew God most intimately.
37. What would you do if heavy persecution came on you/your family?
38. What would you do with an extra free day off of work?
39. Where would you go if you could go anywhere in the world?
40. **If you could become an animal for one day, which one would it be?**
41. **What is one secret place in your house that you only clean on special occasions (like mother-in-law visiting)?**
42. Whom do you admire the most? In what ways does that person inspire you?
43. If you knew your time was cut short, what's one thing you'd change about the way you are now living?
44. If you could be famous, what would you be famous for?
45. What do you strive for the most in your life - ie: accomplishment, security, love, power, excitement, knowledge, etc?
46. If you could go back in time and not return, what would you try to accomplish even if you knew you might change the course of history?
47. **How many of your friendships have lasted more than ten years?**
48. If someone were to write a book about you, what do you think the title and theme would be?
49. What things make your life complicated?
50. **In one line what is life all about?**
51. If your animals could talk, what would they tell you?
52. What would be the greatest birthday present of all time?
53. **Give three words to describe how you feel right now.**
54. If you could hang a motto or saying in every home in the world, what would it be?
55. Which emoji best describes you and why?
56. **What was the make / model / year / color of your first car?**
57. What's your biggest pet peeve?
58. **What's your first name and an adjective that starts with the same first letter, that best describes you? (ie: Carl:Caring)**
59. Favorite Christmas Carol and why?
60. If you could have coffee with anyone in the history of ever, who would it be and why?



# EXPLANATION OF LIFE GROUP ICONS

As you begin to journey through the LIFE Group curriculum, you may see some icons that are unfamiliar to you. Below is a list of common icons that are used in GMBC curriculum.



**CLOCK** - The clock is just a reminder of how long you should be spending on each section in order to complete the curriculum in a timely fashion, honoring the LIFE Group members as well as the Host.



**HISTORY** - The history is basically a transition piece as to where we are in God's Word. It allows us to get up to speed on what was happening just before our current story.



**HOOK** - The hook is a focus piece that helps your LIFE Group to be thinking of the theme of the story before it is told.



**TELL THE STORY** - Orality is the most effective way of telling a story over any other method. Have a preselected group member tell the story from God's Word as best as they can without teaching. Try not to express opinions or point out specifics in the story. Just tell the story. The main objective is to learn the story, not to memorize it word for word. It is ok to mess up when telling the story.

**IMPORTANT: ALL BIBLES SHOULD REMAIN CLOSED FOR THIS PART.**



**REBUILD THE STORY** - At this time, everyone can open their Bibles to the given passage or story set. Have the group rebuild the story from beginning to end by asking questions. (eg: "Where was he going?", "Who was Jesus talking to?", "And then what did he do?") Have the group look for what may have been added or left out.



**CHECK THE STORY** - Use Bibles to read the passage out loud, word for word, so that it is read accurately and in its entirety.



**HEAD** - (Knowledge) —Head level questions are asked to discover God's Word, in its raw form, as a group.



**HEART** - (Character) — Heart level questions are to prompt you to look deeper into your heart and answer sincerely from the core of your being. Remember to use "I" statements when answering heart questions.



**HANDS** - (Action)— Hand level questions are designed to help you see how you can use what you've learned from God's Word and take it outside the four walls of group into your daily life.

# COMPONENTS OF A LIFE GROUP

## WELCOME

- Makes new believers, visitors, and members feel valued and welcomed
- Begins with our phone calls, continues as they enter our homes, and until they leave
- Establishes a foundation for relationships
- Makes them aware of what's going on and brings focus

## OPENING PRAYER

- Invites God's Holy Spirit into our presence
- Prepares our hearts for what God has for us
- Shifts our attention from individual fellowship to the group

## PURPOSE

- Express the purpose of why we are meeting as a LIFE Group (to make disciples, reach the lost, connect the unconnected, etc.)
- Helps prepare our hearts and minds for the group
- Must be in alignment with Glen Meadows Vision and Mission

## GROUND RULES

- Establishes agreed upon boundaries for a healthy group
- Establishes a safe environment where everyone can share openly and honestly
- Provides biblical guidance for healthy conflict resolution

## ICEBREAKER

- Activity that sets the stage for transparency and trust
- Helps create a safe environment and levels the playing field
- May involve low-risk participation
- Game, Testimony, Question, etc
- Celebrating the "wins" and what God is doing through our group

## TOPIC/STORY

- This is the "meat" of the group
- Story from God's Word

## CLOSING PRAYER

- Re-Focuses our attention to God and His provision
- Personal requests, Group needs, Praise God

## PLACES TO PLAY

- Providing others with opportunities to lead by assigning them with components, builds confidence, and models servant leadership and reproducibility

# GROUND RULES

## **WHY GROUND RULES?**

Many of us find ourselves cringing when the subject of rules come up. Rules can often indicate limits or restrictions that impede our desired actions. The ground rules we will abide by are specifically designed to give freedom rather than restrictions. It is our desire that through effective ground rules each person will feel the freedom to share from their hearts, feel the assurance of confidence, and experience a group willing to listen. When interacting as a group, we can find ourselves checking out or shutting down for the smallest of reasons. Being aware of our impact on each other is paramount for a safe environment.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY IS KEY:**

We will all do our part to create an environment where everyone can be real, open, and honest with our struggles and victories. What is said in the group stays in the group.

## **NO FIXING OTHERS:**

Try to hear what people are sharing without trying to fix them. If they want your advice, they'll ask for it. If people think that as soon as they share a problem or issue everyone is going to immediately try to fix them (offer advice/solutions), often they simply won't share at all.

## **LISTEN & PAUSE**

Let's value one another during the discussions by really listening to what is being shared. Don't think about what you're going to say next or how you're going to respond; really listen. After someone shares, give a pause to allow the group to feel the weight of what is being shared and fully consider it before the next person shares. This pause also gives the person time to reflect a little deeper while continuing to share more. Remember, SILENCE IS OK. It gives time for reflection and others to begin sharing.

## **DON'T RESCUE:**

When people are sharing something deeply personal and painful, there can be a tendency to try to make them feel better about themselves or the situation. Often this will cause people to stop sharing and result in not going as deep as they intended. Resist the temptation to rescue people. We must be sensitive to what the Holy Spirit is doing in their life.

## **USE "I" STATEMENTS:**

It's easy to talk about the issues of others; in LIFE Groups we will use "I" statements. We will try to avoid words such as "them," "the church," "us," "we," "he/she," etc. Using "I" statements helps us to focus on what God is doing in our lives and gives us opportunity to self-reflect. This allows maximum potential for effectual change in our lives.

## **NO CROSS TALK:**

Be considerate of others as they are sharing. No side conversations, texting, or phone calls. Cross talk devalues the person sharing and communicates that they are not as important as what you may be doing. (Be sensitive to those with cell phones—kids, family issues, on-call at work). Remember, when going over the Ground Rules in your group, give those who may be on-call or have children the opportunity to communicate that they may need to take a call or text during group.

## **STAY ON TOPIC:**

Much time and prayer is put into the determination of the biblical direction our church is headed. We must value the importance of that direction in taking it to a heart level in our LIFE Groups during the week. In addition, LIFE Group leaders prepare according to this direction and the topic for each lesson. Rabbit trails may devalue the unity as well as what the Lord is doing in our church body. In honoring each individuals time & schedules, please try to stay on topic with every group question. Rabbit trails can also add time to the end of the LIFE Group and does not honor others in our group who may need to get to their families and/or may need rest for the next day's busy schedule.

## **ALLOW OTHERS TO TALK:**

We all have a story or response to share, making it important that we value each other during LIFE Group. Sometimes we may find ourselves overtalking out of nervousness or even habit. However, to honor each person and their time, we must do our part by keeping our own talk time limited and to the point, giving each person an opportunity to interact.

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# ADDITIONAL NOTES / PRAYER REQUESTS

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