



LIFEGROUPS

Leader Guide

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LifeGroup Leadership Guide



Why LifeGroups Exist

LifeGroups exist to find freedom in Christ, to connect with each other and to grow together. That's where God –through his Holy Spirit seems to do his best work.

We believe God created us to live in community with others and only then can we experience the full life He intends for us. (Genesis 2:18, Galatians 6:2)

We believe life change (finding freedom) happens in the context of relationships. Meaningful relationships can be hard to find, and LifeGroups exist to make life-changing relationships relevant and accessible to you and to the people around you.

Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor: If either of them falls down, one can help the other up. But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up. Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm. But how can one keep warm alone? Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken. Ecclesiastes 4:9-12

LifePoint Church LifeGroups Model

At LifePoint Church, we believe our church needs to grow larger and smaller at the same time. We grow larger to reach as many people as possible with the life-giving message of Jesus. We grow smaller by gathering in LifeGroups to build community and care for people.

We base our LifeGroup model on the early Church as described in the Bible in the book of Acts. In Acts, you can read about the tremendous growth of the first church in Jerusalem, where small group meetings in homes helped lay the foundation.

Day after day, in the temple courts and from house to house, they never stopped teaching and proclaiming the good news that Jesus is the Messiah.

Acts 5:42



LifeGroups provide three things:

1. A place to FIND FREEDOM in Christ.

“So Christ has truly set us free. Now make sure that you stay free, and don't set tied up again in slavery to the law.”

Galatians 5:1 NLT

We were not made to do life alone. God created us for community, and LifeGroups provide a place for you to connect with others, share life, and grow in faith together.

2. A place to CONNECT with each other.

“We know what real love is because Jesus gave up His life for us. So we also ought to give up our lives for our brothers and sisters.”

1 JOHN 3:16 NLT

When we do life together, our problems become smaller as God uses others to bring support and encouragement to our lives. LifeGroups become a place where others don't just know your name, but care about what is happening in your life and want to support you in your spiritual journey.

3. A place to GROW together.

“As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another.”

PROVERBS 27:17

We believe every person is created with God-given potential to make a difference in the world. LifeGroups are a place you can grow with others to become more like Jesus and reach the potential God has put inside you.

What LifeGroups Look Like

1. Our groups are “free market.”

“Free market” simply means group leaders are free to use their gifts and interests to determine when and where their group meets and what they meet about. From soccer groups and lunch groups to Bible studies and coffee meet-ups, our groups are as varied as we are. Groups fall into one of nine hubs:

Men • Women • Marriage and Family • Students • Prayer
Outreach • Financial Freedom • Military • Recovery

2. There are three semesters every year.

Life flows in seasons, and we want to make it easy for you to be in the right LifeGroup for you in each season. This is why we have new groups that start and stop three times a year in what we refer to as “semesters.” Our group semesters are winter/spring (January-May), summer (June-July) and fall (September-December).

3. Everyone can join a group.

Our hope is for every person at LifePoint to be connected in meaningful community through a LifeGroup. With so many groups to choose from, we are confident there is a group that is a great fit for you. To find the right group for you, simply visit lifepointchurch.tv/lifegroups to search our online directory of groups. Once you find a few groups that interest you, contact the leaders to learn more and make plans to check it out in person.

4. Anyone can host a group.

We believe everyone has areas of strength and gifting that can benefit others, and hosting a LifeGroup is a great way to make meaningful connections. The first step toward becoming a LifeGroup leader is to attend the LifeGroup Leader Training. These trainings are offered three times a year to give you an overview of how simple it is to start a group. You'll discover that it's easier than you think. Resources available at lifepointchurch.tv/rightnowmedia.

Group Structure

Groups meet regularly during each semester.

Groups meet in a variety of places like homes, parks, restaurants, coffee shops and office buildings.

New groups start every semester making it easy to build community and enjoy several types of groups.

Each LifeGroup session should encourage and include ESPN:

- E:** Encourage
- S:** Share Scripture
- P:** Pray
- N:** Next Steps

LifeGroups are not a place for:

- Business
- Offerings
- Unapproved materials or speakers
- Controversial topics

Your Role as a LifeGroup Leader

God has a part for all of us to play in the church, and LifeGroup Leaders come alongside the pastors and staff of LifePoint to help care for people.



Now these are the gifts Christ gave to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers. Their responsibility is to equip God's people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ. This will continue until we all come to such unity in our faith and knowledge of God's Son that we will be mature in the Lord, measuring up to the full and complete standard of Christ.

Ephesians 4:11-13 NLT

The primary role of a LifeGroup Leader is to help group members move one more step in their walk with God.

Be sure you know the condition of your flocks, give careful attention to your herds.

Proverbs 27:23

Remember: People in your group will be at different places in their spiritual lives and each person will have different next steps to take.

Here is a guide of some next steps you can help people take:

- Start attending Sunday services
- Start reading the Bible regularly
- Start praying regularly
- Be water baptized
- Complete our Growth Track
- Join the Dream Team
- Start giving or tithing
- Attend a LifePoint conference (marriage, women's, men's, etc.)

- Go on a mission trip
- Invite a friend or neighbor to Church or a LifeGroup
- Attend a LifeGroup Leadership Training to become a LifeGroup Leader
- How did you get connected to this LifeGroup?
- What are you most looking forward to in the group?
- Do you attend LifePoint?
- What brought you to LifePoint?
- Which service do you attend?
- Have you ever been part of a LifeGroup before?
- What do you feel like God has been doing in your life lately?

How do I measure if group members are engaged in their next steps?

Ask! Make it part of your regular discussion whether in a group setting or individually.

Here are some great questions to guide your conversation:

- What areas of your faith are you hoping to grow in the coming months?
- What are you focused on in your life right now?
- Have you been through Growth Track?
- Do you remember what your personality type is or what your ministry strengths are?
- Have you ever served on the Dream Team?
- How can I pray for you?
- Have you been through groupONE?

How to be a successful LifeGroup leader:

- Pray daily for the members of your group.
- Consider partnering with a co-leader to help share the responsibility of caring for and leading your group.
- Consider partnering with another individual/family to host a LifeGroup if you don't have a place or are limited on space.
- Connect with group members outside of weekly meetings through phone, email, text, social media, or face-to-face.
- Have fun through laughter and by creating an enjoyable environment.
- Respect people's time by beginning and ending your group on time.
- Invite group members to attend church services and events with you like conferences, or outreach opportunities.
- Rally the group around a member going through crisis. (pastoral care)
- Be considerate of childcare needs and solutions

No matter what your group meets about, each meeting should be made up of four things:

1. Casual Fellowship - Laid back time for group members to talk and get to know each other.
2. Activity or Discussion - This will vary based on what kind of group you're leading. It could be an activity like Frisbee or outreach or a discussion about a book or Sunday message.
3. Prayer and Care - Ask for prayer requests from group members and pray at the beginning and/or the end of each group meeting. (for great resources including articles and effective care strategies, see www.careleader.org)
4. Spiritual Component - This is what differentiates your LifeGroup from other non-church activities. Whether it's through activities or discussion, always find a way to include the Word of God. This can be as simple as sharing something God is teaching you with the group or talking about a verse you read that week.

How to create good group dynamic:

1. Set Expectations

A key to helping people feel comfortable in your group is to let them know what to expect. Take time to share how the group will flow from week to week. This can include things like explaining the times you will begin and end the group, how discussion or group activities will happen, and how group members can share prayer requests or best engage in the group.

2. Follow the 70:30 Rule

Give the members of your group room to speak up instead of doing all the talking yourself. About 70% of talking should come from members and 30% from the leader.

3. Keep Discussion Positive

If conversation takes a negative or destructive turn, guide it back to a healthy place. If someone needs to talk about a sensitive or complex issue, you can follow up with them after the group or call your coach or hub leader to help you respond well.

4. Keep the Conversation Relevant to Everyone

Remember people in your group will be at various places in their spiritual journey. Be thoughtful when you talk about spiritual concepts or church terms that might be unfamiliar to new Christians or new church-goers.

5. Respect Boundaries & Confidentiality

Men should minister to men and women should minister to women. A couple may minister to a single person. We want to maintain integrity and purity in our Small Groups. These boundaries help protect the leaders and group members from entering into an uncomfortable or inappropriate situation.

Preparing for your first few LifeGroup meetings:

- Send a message to group members through PCO, group message, e-mail or other social media reminding them about the first few meetings.
- Start early to set up a welcoming environment.
- Regularly review everyone's names for the first few weeks.
- Go over the group guidelines regularly.

Leading a Discussion

Be Prepared

1. Personally:
 - Make sure that you've spent time thinking and praying about what you'll be discussing.
 - Spend time in prayer for the people you'll be leading.
2. As a leader:
 - Be very familiar with the lesson.
 - Think through important questions and transitions ahead of time.
 - Don't depend on your notes, but use them to stay on track.
 - If you need to look at your notes do it before the next question so you can make eye contact when asking the questions.

The Discussion

1. Try to avoid asking yes/no questions.
2. Lead a discussion – don't preach.
 - Allow them to discover the truth for themselves, guiding them as necessary.
 - When a person has a question, give other people the opportunity to answer it before you jump in with a theological response but be prepared to clarify their responses.

Basic LifeGroup Do's and Don't

Don't Be Afraid of Silence

Let the people in your group sit for a moment and think. Silence isn't always a bad thing.

Don't Feel Like You Must Know All the Answers

We are human, and it's good for the people in your group to see that you are limited. You are, but most people don't think so.

Don't Read Questions Word-for-Word off the Discussion Guide

Understand the questions and be prepared to ask them in your own terms. Feel free to generate your own questions during your preparation and even on the spot

Don't Talk More Than the People in Your Group

Ask questions to generate discussion. Ask people to explain their answers and go into more depth. Allow multiple students to respond even if the first person gets the "right answer".

Do Ask People if They Have Questions

Encourage them to deal with the material on their own terms. Create a climate where people feel the freedom to ask questions.



Do Keep the Group Focused and on Purpose

Don't go down a rabbit trail and leave the topics and/or scripture passages unless something "big time" comes up (i.e. Family Crisis). Be sensitive to the Spirit (but that is not an excuse to be lazy and let the group wander). Wandering is easy; being a leader isn't.

Do Require and Maintain Confidentiality

This allows people to open up because they feel their environment is safe. However, don't keep potentially dangerous information to yourself (i.e. abuse, suicidal, homicidal, destructive intentions, etc. When in doubt, please tell a staff member).

Don't be Discouraged

When (not if) you have a bad night don't be discouraged. There is not a LifeGroup leader in the world that hasn't had bad nights.

Dealing with Problems

Bad Attitude

1. Pray for them and be compassionate (hurt people hurt people).
2. Build a relationship with the person and seek to understand why they act the way they do.

1. Don't be afraid to confront them in love.
2. Seek help from your hub leader or a pastor if you are unsure about how to handle a situation.

Big Situations

1. Never promise to keep a secret.
2. It's better to be safe than sorry; always talk to a hub leader or pastor about any situation that you're not sure how to handle it.

Pastoral Care Guidelines

Life Challenges

Life Challenges are trials, tribulations, tests, suffering, persecution and affliction.

5 Strategies to remember when dealing with those in life challenges:

1. Being a Christian doesn't exempt us from life challenges.
2. A life challenge to us isn't a life challenge to God.
3. God comforts and promises to be present in our life challenges.
4. A life challenge will not last forever.
5. Hope resides in life challenges.

Adversity

Understand that someone's suffering and pain is highly subjective. Never minimize it and always show empathy. Instead of rescuing, be the voice of reason. We are not the rescuers, but we are representatives of the God who rescues them. We are to be the agents of truth and their friend and are to journey with them through their pain.

How do helpers attend to hurting people? Realize that we are in danger of being pulled under or drowning with the individual that's dealing with adversity.

1. Try to get a biblical understanding of that person's situation. Ask, "Is that person's struggle from the World? Is their struggle of the Flesh? Is their struggle coming from the Enemy (Spiritual Warfare)?" The answer to these questions will help you determine how to move forward with an individual.

2. Be cautious. Be careful of using “fix it” verses. Remember that an individual is completely overwhelmed when they are first going through a negative experience. Words need to be very few and be there as a presence for the Holy Spirit to come in and do his work.
3. Demonstrate the love and grace of God. Remember that grace qualifies and characterizes our response.
Let everything you say be good and helpful, so that your words will be an encouragement to those who hear them. – Ephesians 4:29b
4. Jesus doesn't abandon us, bear with them. You'll want to abandon because there will be one crisis too many or a phone call too many. Love of the Father doesn't abandon his own, and we shouldn't either. Like people first finding their salvation, our issues are not starting, it's staying.
“Always be humble and gentle. Be patient with each other, making allowance for each other's faults because of your love.” – Ephesians 4:2
5. Healing takes place in community. Seek out those who have demonstrated God's character of justice, truth, love and mercy and teach them how to cling onto those characteristics when moving forward. When you go into someone else's adversity, remember and pray, *“Don't let me go into their hardship without Your presence and only let me go if I'm going to be successful”.*

Situations to Report

If any of the following occurs within your group, please report immediately to both your hub leader and a staff pastor:

1. **Hospitalization / ER (Protracted Hospitalizations)**
2. **Abuse / Self-Harm / Endangerment**
3. **Death**

Frequently Asked Questions

What do we do on the first night of group?

We suggest by starting off with an icebreaker or a relationship building exercise. Your group might need to spend some time getting to know one another. Introductions can help create a relaxed social atmosphere that enables them to be open with



those around them. Don't forget to have fun! We encourage you to create a place where laughter happens often. People may be more inclined to share and participate in group discussions when they feel relaxed and can laugh together.

How do we handle childcare needs in our group?

Work together as a group to find what options best suit your needs. A few options to consider:

Option 1: Have the group meet in the living room/dining room and the children meet in a separate room. This keeps the kids close by, but also provides some privacy for those in the group during discussions.

Option 2: Select a home that is in a central location for those in the group, and pool finances to hire a babysitter to stay with the children. At the end of the night, the parents are free to go pick their kids up at the agreed upon time.

If you find an option that works for your group that is not listed above, go for it! The key is communication. As long as everyone feels comfortable and can agree, the group can be successful.

What should I do if someone asks a question I can't answer?

It's okay to not have all the answers. Thankfully, we can find guidance through prayer, God's Word, and the Holy Spirit. Encourage them to spend time reading the Bible and praying. Also, let them know that you will do your best to get some information and get back with them at your next LifeGroup meeting. Do some personal research and call your hub leader to get advice.

What should I do if someone in my group shares something with me (or the group) that requires attention beyond what I (or we) can provide?

If you encounter a difficult situation within your LifeGroup, please know that you are not alone. If a member is going through a crisis, you can rally the group around them to provide prayer, encouragement, and support. Use wisdom and be sensitive to the situation. If you are unsure of what to do, don't hesitate to ask your LifeGroup director.

What should I do if I encounter the following types of personalities in my group?

Dominators

Definition: have an answer for every question and every answer seems to go on forever. Dominators are usually very knowledgeable and kind-hearted. They just don't always have the social skills needed to help you keep things on track. Some dominators are able to talk for a long time. You need to have the courage to help the dominator wrap things up. One of the best methods is to simply finish the dominator's thoughts for him or her then quickly allow someone else to speak.

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- **What a small group leader can do:** The secret to dealing with dominators is to remember that the group is usually desperate for the facilitator to do something. You should begin by working to draw others out. Look for a quick breath, no matter how short, to jump in and allow others to contribute. Dominators aren't the enemy. In fact, dominators will bring profound points to the conversation. Turn dominators into allies by talking to them after the get-together. Compliment the dominator's quick thinking and openness, explain the goals for drawing everyone into the discussion, and ask the dominator to help draw out everyone during future discussions.

Hiders

Definition: are easy to ignore because they never bother the other group members. In fact, they seem to be quite good at being ignored and missed. Hiders need very

for you." Known for being needy, revealers work best with facilitators who are very direct and very gentle at the same time.

Problem Solvers

Definition: have a tough time seeing others in pain or confusion. With great intentions, the problem solver tries to fix other group members, often offering pat answers and solutions. Remind your group that each friend is in the process of discovery and needs time to work out his or her questions.

- **What a small group leader can do:** If a problem solver gives a pat answer that's received as judgmental or insensitive by a group member, don't panic. Quickly respond by showing empathy for the person with the problem or question. You might say, "I'm sorry you're going through that. Keep sharing and struggling forward. We'll do our best to support you along the way." If a problem solver doesn't seem to catch your hints and redirection, talk to him or her after a get-together. Tell the problem solver that you appreciate his or her wisdom. Then remind the problem solver that you want everyone to have the freedom to talk, discover, and even struggle through things.

Spiritual Reference Guide

In life giving ministry, it is helpful to know the scriptures that pertain to different issues in life. Many times, simply reading the Word of God to the person, praying with them and allowing the Holy Spirit to bring encouragement, conviction and truth to their lives is the best thing we can do for them. The following are some scriptures, arranged alphabetically by subject that you might find helpful to have on hand.

Anxiety	Discouragement	Grief	Jealousy
Philippians 4:6-13	Galatians 6:9	John 14:1-3	James 3:16
1 Peter 5:7	Psalms 138:7-8	John 11:25	1 Corinthians 3:3
Hebrews 13:5-6	2 Corinthians 4:8-9	1 Corinthians 13:12	Exodus 20:17

Addictions

Romans 6:12
 1 Corinthians 6:19
 Galatians 5:1

Deliverance

James 4:7
 Matthew 18:18
 Luke 10:19

Forgiveness

2 Corinthians 2:10-11
 Matthew 6:14-15
 Romans 12:14

Humility

Matthew 18:4
 James 4:10
 Proverbs 22:4

Baptism in Spirit

Acts 2:38
 Luke 11:13

Faith

Hebrews 11:1
 Hebrews 11:6
 Hebrews 12:2

Healing

Exodus 15:26
 1 Peter 2:24
 1 John 5:14-15

Judging Others

Matthew 7:2-5
 James 2:13
 John 5:30

Confession

1 John 1:9
 Psalm 32:3
 James 5:16

Fear

Romans 8:13-17
 2 Thessalonians 3:3
 Isaiah 41:10

Holy Spirit

John 16:17
 John 16:8-13
 Acts 9:31

Money

1 Timothy 6:8
 1 Timothy 6:10
 1 John 2:15

Condemnation

Romans 8:1
 John 5:24
 John 3:17-18

Fasting

Matthew 6:16
 Isaiah 58:3
 Isaiah 58:5

Holiness

1 Peter 1:14-16
 Ecclesiastes 20:22
 Romans 12:2

Loneliness

Isaiah 54:10
 Hebrews 13:5-6
 Revelation 3:20

Obedience

1 John 2:3
 1 John 3:21
 Deut. 11:26-28

Reconciliation

2 Cor. 5:18-19
 Matthew 5:23-26
 Matthew 18:15-17

Suicide

Psalm 91:1,11,12,15,16
 John 10:10

Trust in the Lord

Proverbs 3:5-6
 Ephesians 6:16
 Psalm 56:4

Anger

James 1:19
 Ephesians 4:26, 31
 Matthew 5:40

Depression

Psalm 51:10-12
 Romans 8:28, 31
 1 Thessalonians 5:18

Freedom

Galatians 5:13-26

Intercession

1 Timothy 2:1
 Ephesians 6:19

Peace of Mind

John 16:33
 Romans 5:1
 Colossians 3:15

Salvation

John 3:16
 Romans 6:23
 Romans 8:1

Temptation

1 Corinthians 10:13
 Genesis 4:7
 Romans 6:6

Who we are in Christ

1 Peter 2:9
 Revelation 2:26
 Ephesians 2:6,10

Persistence

2 Timothy 4:7
Galatians 6:9
Revelation 2:24

Sexual Immorality

2 Timothy 2:22
1 Thessalonians 4:3-4
1 Corinthians 10:13

Thanksgiving

Psalms 100:1
Psalms 139:13

Prayer

1 John 3:21
1 John 3:14-15

Spiritual Gifts

Romans 12:6-8
1 Corinthians 12:7-11

Tithing and Giving

Malachi 3:8-10
Proverbs 3:9
Luke 6:38
2 Corinthians 9:7

Pride

Proverbs 16:5
James 4:6
Isaiah 25:11

Spiritual Warfare

1 Timothy 4:1
1 Timothy 6:12
Ephesians 6:10-18

Trials

James 1:12
2 Corinthians 4:17
1 Peter 4:12
1 Peter 5:10
Revelation 3:19

Priorities

Matthew 6:33
Matthew 22:36-39

Submit to Authority

1 Peter 2:13
Hebrews 13:17
Romans 13:1-7



The LifePoint Church Honor Code

As an essential part of the LifePoint leadership family, you have a responsibility to develop and exhibit mature Christian behavior. This should be the basic premise of your desire to serve in a Servant/Leader position here at LifePoint.

While serving the Body of Christ as a LifeGroup Leader, you pledge to present a good appearance at all times. In both attitude and behavior, you should strive to demonstrate Biblical standards in all situations.

As Christians, the way we present ourselves is of vital importance to the way others perceive Christ. Our conduct should never be an embarrassment to Christ, but should exemplify the best qualities of a mature believer and servant-leader.

Exemplifying the highest moral commitment, our LifeGroup leaders are to maintain a disciplined life of Bible reading, prayer, and fasting. You should also refrain from such things as:

- Profanity
- Smoking or chewing tobacco
- Gambling
- Indulging in much wine or other alcoholic beverages
- Dishonest gain
- Illegal drugs
- Pornography
- Sexual immorality, and all behaviors which might cause Christ to grieve and others to stumble

By providing an example in speech and action, we encourage others to grow in Christ and become servant-leaders themselves. This is a way of life measured by the heart and commitment of each leader in the LifePoint family. We should regard it as an essential part of our development, not as an imposition or restriction.

You say, "I am allowed to do anything" – but not everything is good for you. You say, "I am allowed to do anything" – but not everything is beneficial. Don't be concerned for your own good but for the good of others. – 1 Corinthians 10:23-24.

Leader Qualifications

- Complete Growth Track.
- Sincere, worthy of respect, and of a good reputation.
- Have a genuine desire to serve and minister to other people.
- Able to lead, motivate, and teach other people.
- Able to create positive group dynamics, and deal with conflict resolution within the group.
- Attend groupONE at least one semester.

LifePoint Church Abuse Policy

I understand that LifePoint is a safe place for children and vulnerable adults and that we comply with all Federal and State laws regarding reporting suspected child abuse. As a LifeGroup Leader, I understand that suspected abuse is to be reported to the staff member who oversees the area in which I serve. I also understand the 4 types of abuse defined below:

- Physical: A physical act directed at a child or vulnerable adult that causes injury;
- Sexual: Contact or interactions between a child and an adult, or another child, when the child is being used for sexual stimulation of the perpetrator or another person. This includes exploitation through photographs, videos, or other communication methods;
- Emotional: Acts or omissions by the parent or other caregivers that have caused, or could cause, serious behavioral, cognitive, emotional, or mental disorders;
- Neglect: Failure to provide for the child or vulnerable adult's basic needs. This includes adequate adult supervision, medical attention, housing, food, and clothing. Most cases of physical neglect involve inadequate adult supervision that has caused harm to the child or vulnerable adult, or places them in danger of such harm.

I understand it is not my responsibility to investigate and in no instance will I confront a parent or care giver if abuse is suspected. As a LifeGroup Leader, I agree to comply with this policy and report any suspected abuse to the staff person who oversees the area in which I serve.

LifeGroup Guidelines

Confidentiality. Everything shared in the group is confidential and should not leave the room. This promise helps us to develop trust and creates a safe place for us to talk about personal matters.

Try not to give advice. We want to be able to share our feelings and experiences. This is not an opportunity to share unsolicited advice except when it is specifically asked for.

Responsibility. All of us share the responsibility to make the group work.

Acceptance. The group should strive to accept each other just as we are, and try to avoid making unnecessary judgments.

Do our best to allow one speaker at a time. Groups are most beneficial when all of the participants have the opportunity to share and discuss individual issues or concerns. Members need to be mindful of limited time and give each person enough time to speak without interruptions.

Giving attention. Members will give supportive attention to the person who is speaking and try to avoid side-conversations.

Avoid interruptions. If an interruption is necessary, try to return the conversation to the person who was speaking as soon as possible.

Sharing. Sharing is encouraged, but not required. Share only if you are comfortable doing so.

Questions. Group members have the right to ask questions and the right to refuse to answer.

Discussion. The group won't discuss the lives and issues of those who are not present for the group.

Begin and end on time. We will do best to make sure that each of our sessions begin and end on time.

Three LifeGroups Experiences

As a Leader, we encourage you to take your LifeGroup through “3 Experiences”. The experiences are:

1. Prayer
2. Serve
3. Share Your Story

Prayer: In each semester of your LifeGroup, we want to encourage you as Leaders to lead your LifeGroup through a prayer experience. Look to start your prayer experience at Week 3 of your LifeGroup. This means you'd pray during the entire time of your meet-up. A suggested time line or experience may look like the following:

Suggested Prayer Outline

- Consider playing some calming worship music in the background during the experience.
- 15-20 minutes of devotion utilizing any of the tools listed below.
- 15-30 minutes of praying as a group. Encourage everyone in the group to share a prayer request or a praise report. Lead your group to stand together and have each individual pray for the person to their left. This gives everyone the opportunity to pray for someone in their group. It may be uncomfortable as it will be many peoples first time praying out loud. Simply encourage them through it. This part of the experience can take 15-30 minutes. Discern where God is leading you and the group.
- 10-15 minutes of individual prayer. Create a time and encourage people to pray on their own. This would be a great time to provide them with the “Lord's Prayer” outline which can serve as a guide for personal prayer.
- Letter from God: Encourage people to bring something to write with and have them write a letter from God as if He's speaking to them. This is a very moving moment so be sure to lead the people in your group well through other forms of prayer prior to this moment.
- 10-15 minutes of a Debrief: Take time to talk about what everyone experienced. Ask your group how God moved in their prayer. What were their thoughts before the experience versus their thoughts after the experience. Encourage people to share their feelings on anything relevant from God and how can we continue to add these moments in our lives daily.



Tools for Prayer

- Our Divine Helper (The Holy Spirit): John 14:16-17, 1 Corinthians 12:13, Ephesians 4:30, Romans 8:11, 1 Corinthians 2:10-12, Ephesians 3:16 and Galatians 5:22-23.
- Purpose of Prayer: Hebrews 4:16, John 10:3-4
- The Lord's Prayer: Utilize the Lord's Prayer as a reference guide.
- Pray Privately: Jesus went away to pray on his own (Luke 9:18 and Mark 1:35).
- Pray Regularly: Jesus made prayer a daily rhythm in his life. Through prayer, he demonstrated a vibrant relationship with our Heavenly Father through the power and guidance of the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 6:18).
- Pray Genuinely: Don't focus on trying to impress others or God with your prayers. God wants to hear your prayers from your heart and he wants them to be genuine (Matthew 6:5-7).
- Praise: Throughout the Bible, our God is praised over 350 times. When we praise our God, we are acknowledging how great our God is and all He has done for us (Psalm 9:1-2).
- Repent: To repent means to confess our specific sin to God and turn away from doing them again (1 John 1:8-9).
- Ask: We serve a God that encourages us to come to Him and ask what is on our mind. Jesus wants us to learn how to ask and understand what our heavenly Father wants to share with us (Matthew 7:7-11).
- Listen: Once we've made our request known to God, we must become great listeners to carry out His instruction. We must regularly position ourselves to take time to listen to the voice of God. This can serve as an encouragement in building our faith when we remember what God has done in our life due to our obedience.

12 things to consider Praying

1. **Pray for those in Authority:** (President, senators, legislators and judges) Romans 13:1 and 1 Timothy 2:1-4
2. **Pray for Churches:** (Pastors, Staff, Dream Teams & all facets of ministry) Psalm 1:1-3, Psalm 133:1, Luke 4:18, Luke 10:19, Philippians 1:27, Romans 10:14-15 and Matthew 9:37-38
3. **Pray for the Lost:** (all those needing Jesus) John 3:16 and Matthew 18:18
4. **Pray for our City:** (Mayor, council, businesses etc.) 1 Timothy 2:1-2, Proverbs 21:1 and Jeremiah 11:7
5. **Pray for Military:** (All branches) Colossians 2:15, Isaiah 11:9 and Acts 2:21
6. **Pray for Marriages:** Matthew 19:6, Romans 12:21, Romans 5:5, Philippians 2:2 and Philippians 2:13
7. **Pray for Children:** 1 Peter 3:18, Ephesians 5:4, Galatians 3:13 and Jeremiah 29:11-13
8. **Pray for Singles & Seniors:** John 14:1, 1 John 4:19 and Hebrews 4:10
9. **Pray for Missionaries:** Psalm 146:7, Ephesians 6:10&16 and 3 John 2
10. **Pray for Finances:** (Impact, all projects, benevolence, etc.) Deuteronomy 26:1&3, Malachi 3:10 and Matthew 12:34
11. **Pray for Schools:** (All grade levels, college and grad school) Colossians 3:2, Philippians 2:15-16, Acts 16:31 and Jeremiah 1:12
12. **Pray for Outpouring of God's Spirit on All:** Joel 2:28, Acts 1:8 and Acts 2:4

Serve: Serving others can move us past an obligation and move us toward becoming the person God desires us to be. As we serve, we're being agents of change. We are participating in God's "Shalom", Peace. "Shalom" in the Hebrew is peace and the mission of God is to restore the brokenness that has taken place between us, each other, creation and God. God has restored every one of us and he invites us to be a part of His story to lead others to Him so that they may be restored as well.

This is why the Serve Experience is so important. The outcome is not just a focus on doing, but an emphasis of being. Imagine several LifeGroups serving one individual, several individuals or partnering with an organization to be the hands and feet of Jesus and demonstrate the love of the father through servanthood. Serving is more than checking off a checklist, it's a call to action and should ultimately be our way of life. *"For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."* – Mark 10:45 ESV

As we serve others, be sure to lead and remind the members in your group that none of us are above anyone. God has no favorites. Jesus had every right to hold himself in high stature because he was made equal with God, yet he emptied Himself with humility to serve others. *"Who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross."* - Philippians 2:6-8. Jesus gave up his own goals and desires to serve others and as followers of Christ, we have been called to do the same.

How you can Serve

- Cast vision for the timeframe and day your group will be serving. Ensure you and the group hold a focus of BEING over DOING.
- Guide your group and remind them of why we serve and of its importance to God. The following Scriptures will help to guide your group and create great discussion to prepare hearts for the serve experience. John 20:21, Ephesians 2:10, Mark 10:45, Philippians 2:6-8, John 13:13-15, Acts 1:8 and Matthew 28:18-20
- Utilize the list that's provided for you to partner with any non-profit organization.
- Consider serving someone you know personally (helping someone move, helping with a house project etc.)
- Serving the Homeless (Pack brown bag lunches, provide small bags of toiletries etc.)
- Get creative. If you or someone in your group has an idea to serve someone or a group of people, encourage it.

The goal isn't to do everything, but we need to do something. Do for one what you wish you could do for all.

Share your Story: Being able to share your story is a huge part of our walk with Christ. In fact, it's one of Jesus last commandments to what is referred to as "The Great Commission". Your story is the one message your most qualified to preach.

"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the son and of the Holy Spirit..." - Matthew 28:19



When Jesus says, “Go...” it’s a call to action. To carry out the command of Jesus requires movement on our part. Encourage the members in your group and remind them how they came to Christ. Maybe someone invited them to church. Maybe they met someone in a public place and an individual shared their story with them. Maybe God met you right where you were in the middle of a crisis or surreal positive moment. However, it happened, something, someone or God went to you, so you could hear the gospel, give your life to Christ and live for Him. Remember to share your story with all people. Jesus reminds us that the gospel is for everyone and we must be willing to go outside our comfort zone and preferences to lead people to Christ. As we share our story, be reminded that Jesus is with you.

“...teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” – Matthew 28:20

Remind your group that Jesus is with you always. He desires to empower you to fulfill the call He has placed over your life. Jesus also says you will be filled and led by the Holy Spirit (John 16:7 and 13-15). When Jesus calls us to action, He will never expect you to do it alone. There are some things that God calls us to do and it will seem impossible for us to fulfill. He is looking to do something so big and miraculous with you, in you and through you that it will require total dependence on God to get it done and He does that through the Holy Spirit.

The mission of LifePoint Church is, “To lead people to become fully devoted followers of Jesus

Christ". We lead people to Christ by sharing our story. It's ok if your story doesn't always lead people to Christ. Remember, we can't save anyone, only Jesus saves. The goal is for us to follow the leading and commands of Jesus because we love Him and are devoted to Him. That best reflects in our approach with those who are far from God. If we are faithful to Jesus, He will be faithful to us and use us for His glory and partner with us to lead others back to a relationship with Him.

How to Share your Story

- Remind people in your group the importance of building a relationship with people and investing in them. This helps get individuals comfortable when sharing their story. Start with a co-worker, neighbor, family member, friend or anyone the Lord lays on your heart.
- Practice sharing your story with each other in your group with a minimum of two to three minutes. This gives everyone an opportunity to work through their delivery and get comfortable in sharing how they came to Christ.
- Remind and ask people in your group how they came to Christ. Use those experiences as an encouragement when sharing your story with others.
- Encourage everyone to talk about the importance of inviting the Holy Spirit to be a part of how you share your story.
- Discuss in your group challenges or concerns you have in sharing your story and how you can overcome it.

Some Questions to Ask When Engaging Others

1. *Do you ever think of spiritual things?*

95% of people believe in a form of God. 1 out of 3 believe in a different kind of God. You can respond with, "*I think of spiritual things all the time. Those thoughts motivated me down that path to find out more of Christ. Can I share with you what happened to me?*"

2. *How would you describe your relationship with God?*

Learn to **LISTEN** without Judgement. If you feel like you live under the feeling of someone judging you, you don't feel safe or cared for. Learn to love them regardless of their answer. Don't feel like you have to protect God's reputation. Needs and Sin are different from each other. It's ok to share those needs because everyone has them. You can respond with, "*I do have needs. I have a great big God and he helps me to meet them.*"

3. *I know you've been going through a difficult time, would you mind if I pray for you?*

Be sensitive to their situation and don't embarrass them. If you can pray for them right now, do it. You don't need to be elegant, just be sincere. Don't be long winded, learn to be short (they'll be glad of that). Pray in Jesus name, so they know exactly who you are praying to.

4. *Where do you feel, think or believe you are on your spiritual journey in life?*

Ask on a Scale of 1-10 and discern how to connect their answer to your story.

5. *I have made some mistakes myself and then I became a Christian. Can I tell you about it?*

You don't relate to people by common circumstances, you relate to people by common need.

6. *How do you think, believe or feel becoming a Christian would change your life?*

Find out peoples "Value System". Your relationship with the Lord is not based on the "Do's" and "Don'ts" but based on a relationship with Christ similar to a healthy relationship with another individual.

7. *Is there one thing in your life that sometimes makes you think about needing God?*

Doesn't matter if they are up and out, or down and out. Everyone needs Jesus and this may be your opportunity to share your story.

8. *Would you like to know the difference between Religion and Christianity?*

Suggested Response: Religion is Man's search for God. Christianity is God's search for man. All other religions are about us working our way to God. Christianity shows us that God worked His way to us through human form and His name is Jesus. *"For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."* – **Mark 10:45**

9. *What do you believe about Jesus?*

Listen and don't be offended by their answer. If you don't understand something about

what they share, ask for them to elaborate and hear what they have to say. Learn to ask good follow up questions so you are able to better understand them. Once you feel you have a good understanding as to how they view Jesus, ask them, "*Can I share with you what I believe about Jesus?*" and share your story. "*You must all be quick to listen, slow to speak.*" - **James 1:19 NLT**

10. *Do you have any church, spiritual or religious background?*

This gives you their background and a little bit of their history, so you can better understand them and where they are coming from. "*Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.*" - **Philippians 2:4**

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