

The Power of One

AN EIGHT-WEEK GROUP STUDY

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INTRODUCTION

Dear Life Group Member,

Why should I be in this group?

Life Groups are designed to help you experience the life God has for you by helping you CONNECT with other believers, helping you GROW to be more like Christ, and making an IMPACT with the gospel.

Every time a group meets, they spend time connecting through building relationships, growing through a discussion-led Bible study, and making an impact by supporting each other through prayer and service. As a result, group members experience growth, belonging, and care. A Life Group is your chance to pursue healthy relationships and spiritual growth. You can't grow spiritually without connecting relationally.

How will this series help me?

In this 8-week Life Group series, we will explore stories throughout Scripture where one person faces daunting odds in order to serve the Lord. Each of these stories will illustrate the power of God and inspire His people.

Through this study and discussion, we will learn that God often chooses unassuming people in order to accomplish His plan. We will uncover vital truths that we must understand in order to be useful in God's Kingdom. And we will look into the hearts of God's willing servants to see how our hearts can beat like theirs. Our hope and prayer is that each of us can step forward to discover how God can use just one person like us in order to affect great change to fulfill His mission.

What is my role in this group?

As you attend a weekend service and participate in this Life Group series, you will be equipped to live the life that God desires for you. Of course, the bottom line is, it comes down to you. Only you can share in your group, pray about the things God is teaching you, and take action to allow Jesus to work in you and through you. Enjoy the encouragement and challenges that God desires as His grace abounds in your Life Group.

Sincerely,
Life Groups Team

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHY

As a Life Group team, there are people's teachings that we love and admire; once we heard, Jodi we knew she was perfect for this series. She is biblical, theological, deep, relevant, funny, inspirational, and lastly applicational. We hope this is a series where you realize the power of one is not just in these stories, but in your story as well.



JODI HICKERSON

Jodi Hickerson serves as Teaching Pastor and Programming Director for Mission Church in Ventura, CA. Jodi and her husband Mike, along with their three daughters, are a part of the team that planted Mission Church in September of 2011. Jodi has the privilege of teaching at churches and conferences all over the country, but being a part of her local church continues to be the adventure she cannot imagine missing out on!

OUTLINE FOR EACH SESSION

Every Life Group session is structured to reflect the values of Life Groups, which are: Connect, Grow, and Impact. Therefore, the sessions are designed to help each group member participate and gain deeper insight into each topic by connecting with others, growing to be more like Christ, and impacting the community with the gospel.



The foundation for spiritual growth is an intimate connection with God and His family (a few people who really know you and share their lives with you). This section of each session is designed to allow group members to get to know each other. You can do this by using the icebreaker questions provided, or by asking light, easy-to-answer questions of your own that invite involvement from everyone.

As your group begins, use the Agreement, Calendar, and Community Project Worksheet found under the Life Group Toolbox to help your group see how everyone has a part in making a Life Group come to life. As the group develops intimacy, use the Prayer and Praise Report to keep the group connected.

Serving as a companion to the study guide is the video teachings. These videos are designed to combine each segment from pastors and teachers along with leadership insights and personal stories of life change. Using the teaching video will add value to this life group series.



Here is where you will process the video teaching you heard and saw as a group. The focus won't be on accumulating information, but on how we should live in light of the Word of God. We want to help you apply the insights from Scripture practically, creatively, and from your heart, as well as your head. At the end of the day, allowing the timeless truth from God's Word to transform our lives in Christ is our greatest aim.



Impact is about putting what you learned into action. It is about taking your next steps and walking the talk. This section is to help apply the insights and principles learned in the lesson. It is by this application that the lesson will have an impact in you as well as through you. We ask that all groups do some sort of community project together some time during each series. Most groups have found that they have made significant contributions to society through this, and have made a lasting impact on people's lives for Jesus.

This is also a good place to have different group members close in prayer, even when the instructions don't specify. We encourage you to provide time, if schedule allows, for people to reflect on the Prayer and Praise Report at the end of each session or take a little time to meet with a Spiritual Growth Partner.

USING THIS WORKBOOK

Five Points to Help You Have a Great Life Group Experience

- 1** Notice in the Table of Contents there are three sections:
(a) Sessions (b) Life Group Toolbox
Familiarize yourself with the Appendix as some of them will be used in the weekly sessions.
- 2** Use this workbook as a guide, not a straightjacket. If the group responds to the lesson in an unexpected, but honest way, go with that. If you think of a better question than one in a lesson, ask it.
- 3** Read the “Outline for Each Session” so that you understand how the sessions will flow. Choose questions that will best suit your group and stimulate the best discussion.
- 4** Enjoy the process and the discussion as you hear different perspectives in the answers from your group members. There are so many “gray area” answers to questions. Learn to listen as others speak.

Life Group Roster

As you begin, turn to the Life Group Roster on **Page 75**. Take time to pass around your study guides and have everyone write down their contact information.

Life Group Agreement

Whether your group is new or ongoing, it’s always important to reflect on and review your values together. On **Page 76**, there is a Life Group Agreement with the values we’ve found most useful in sustaining healthy, balanced groups. Take a few minutes to go over the agreement together.

Life Group Calendar

One of the markers of a healthy and happy group is when everyone takes ownership of the group. A great way to help everyone is to share in weekly responsibilities, whether it’s taking turns praying for the group, providing snacks or drinks. You can turn to **Page 77** where you will find the Life Group Calendar and blank group tasks.

1 The Judge and Her Calling



Each session will begin with a few questions to help you connect with and get to know one another. Since this is your first time together (at least for this new series), take a few minutes to make sure everyone knows each other.

Apart from your mother or wife (if you are married), who is the greatest woman you have ever met?

Other than your mother and elementary school teachers, when have you been under the leadership of a woman who called you forth to undertake new paths? Why or why not was this difficult for you?

Play the "[Session One: The Judge and Her Calling](#)" video. Use the space below for notes, questions, or comments you'd like to discuss with the group.

“ Leadership is influence and we all have influence over someone or in someone’s life... we all have influence somewhere. You are a leader. And I believe that there’s a lot that we can learn from a leader like Deborah.

— Jodi Hickerson



In the following section, you will explore Bible passages and take part in discussions to help expand your knowledge on the topic of this session. If time is a concern, please choose just a few questions to discuss in your group.

What stood out to you in the video?

Read Judges 4:1-8

1. Why do you think Deborah gave the instructions to Barak instead of leading the army herself?
2. In your opinion, why did Barak insist on having Deborah accompany him and his army? What could have been the result of Barak's mistrust of Deborah's (and God's) instructions?
3. Describe a time when you were hesitant, doubtful, or even disobedient to the calling and direction of God.

Read Judges 4:9-16

4. What is the source of Deborah's confidence as she delivers instructions to Barak? How would your life and your calling from God flourish if you possessed Deborah's level of confidence?

“ And while our God always pursues us, always has the invitation extended to us, always desires for us to be in relationship with Him... In His grace and unfailing love, He welcomes us in.

— Jodi Hickerson

5. Come up with a list, as a group, of important qualifications Deborah possessed that God desired in a leader. What makes these qualifications so important?
6. Share about someone that exemplifies some of these qualifications. How has this person made a difference in the kingdom of God?
7. How do you think Barak felt about being called to action by Deborah? What do you think was Barak's problem with Deborah's instructions to him?
8. Describe some ways in which you are more like Barak but wish you were more like Deborah.
9. How can your Life Group pray for you to live with courage, obedience, and faithfulness to God like Deborah did?

DEEPER STUDY QUESTIONS

Read *Judges 4:17-24*

10. God used Jael who did not have Deborah's level of leadership. What did Jael possess that made her useful to accomplish God's purpose?

11. How did God use the discernment of Jael in this story? How would this level of discernment impact your journey in following Christ?

12. God is certainly not calling His people to a level of violence that Jael exhibited in this story. However, He does call us to stand against evil. What "spike in the ground" experience has proven to be a turning point in your life, helping you to take a stand?

13. What does this story of Deborah and Jael teach us regarding God's view of gender?

NOTES



One of the core principles in Life Groups is to have an impact on the community around us. In the following section, we have given you some ideas of how you can have an impact in the community around us.

Group: We all have friends, family, and co-workers who need to understand that God knows them and He knows what they’re going through. One way to help them come to a knowing relationship with God is to pray for them with your Life Group, that they would find a loving relationship with Jesus. We would like for you and your Life Group to visit the **Blessing List on Page 81**. Spend some time in your Life Group sharing names of men and women to encounter Jesus. Pray for them to submit their lives to the love of Jesus. After all, the greatest blessing anyone can receive is to be in relationship with the living God.

Individual: What is your leadership type? Studies by Psychologist Carl Jung revealed that people could be classified by four personality characteristics. These characteristics relate to an individual’s personality and preference of interaction with the world. In these four pairs, each person has a preference toward one side of the pair over the other.

The pairs of personality types are:

- Extrovert/Introvert (E/I) – dealing with personal space (group or self) or managing energy
- Sensation/Intuition (S/N) – reacting to situations, processing information by feeling or theories and patterns
- Thinking/Feeling (T/F) – reflection vs. emotion; connecting/engage
- Perceiving/Judging (P/J) – organization and order vs. spontaneous

There are several Myers Briggs tests which you may find on the Internet to help you determine which characteristics best fit you. These types of tests are widely used by companies and businesses to determine teams and team leaders when hiring.

Once you know your personality type, use your abilities to lift up others and find your place in God’s kingdom.

Please take some time to end your group in prayer. You may use the Prayer and Praise Report on the following page as you pray and close your session for this week.

PRAYER AND PRAISE

This is a place where you can write each other’s prayer requests, and make a note when God answers prayer. Pray for each other’s requests out loud together as a group. If you’re new to group prayer, you may pray silently.

Prayer Requests

Praise Reports

2 The Boy and His Lunch Box



What is your favorite lunch food?

What is your favorite type of bread and/or fish?

Play the "[Session Two: The Boy and His Lunchbox](#)" video. Use the space below for notes, questions, or comments you'd like to discuss with the group.

// Don't let fear bully you. Don't let the enemy use fear to keep you from offering up what's in your hand into the hands of God.

— Jodi Hickerson



What stood out to you in the video?

Read John 6:1-15

1. Aside from the resurrection, the story of Jesus feeding the 5,000 is the only miracle recorded in all four Gospels. Why do you think that is?
2. According to this passage, why did the crowd follow Jesus at the beginning of this story? What did they expect from Him?
3. How did Andrew and Phillip respond to Jesus' question in verse 5? How would you have responded if Jesus asked you to feed 5,000+ people on the spot?
4. Why do you think Jesus would ask a question to test His disciples (vs. 6)?
5. Describe how Jesus has tested you. How did you respond to Him?

**// What if we, the Church, all of us,
Began to live a little dangerous,
Came out from hiding behind the brush,
Allowed God to use what He gave to us.
What if?**

— Jodi Hickerson

6. Describe a time when God stretched your limited resources. How did this experience deepen your faith in God?
7. Share about any resources you are holding onto that God would multiply if you offered it to Him. How do you think God could use this to bless others as He did with the boy's offering?
8. If God is not limited by our resources, why do we limit the resources we entrust to Him?
9. Explain the significance of the leftovers after "they had all had enough to eat" (vs. 12-13)? What was John communicating in this tidbit?
10. How can your Life Group pray for you to trust God and build your faith in giving even your smallest resources to Him?



Group: We want to encourage all of our Life Groups who are willing to connect with one of our Global Partners. These Global Partners are an extension of Shepherd Church. Our hope is that you would be aware of and be an active participant in what God is doing around the world through Shepherd Church.

The best way you can bless our Global Partners is with your time and prayers. We encourage you to sign-up to receive their newsletters, follow them via social media, and email or hand-write letters to encourage them on their journey. These regular communications from home mean the world to them. Through this, Global Partners are reminded that they are loved, known, and supported with what God is doing through them.

Shepherd Church is one of their many financial supporters, along with other churches and individuals. We ask that you pray about your individual participation. Your encouragement, friendship, and prayers make a significant difference and any financial support would be the icing on the cake! Please visit lifegroups.org/GlobalPartners for a list of all the Global Partners that Shepherd Church is supporting.

Individual: Sometimes we must give up things that make us feel good in order to experience something better. We may not have imagined what could be better because we are not viewing life from God’s perspective. Sometimes “creature comforts” keep us from living the life God called us to live and do the things that God called us to do.

Write out a list of seven “creature comfort” or “mindless activity” things you’ve purchased for yourself over this past year. How have these things brought you happiness and/or ease to you? Ask: Have they truly brought comfort and ease to your life or have they distracted you from more important areas of your life? Of those seven things, which one has gotten the most attention from you, and could you give it up in order to have your focus more and more on God? Ask yourself how your relationship with God might benefit if you were to get rid of one or more of these items. How do you think your ability to be faithful to His call on your life would increase?

PRAYER AND PRAISE

This is a place where you can write each other’s prayer requests, and make a note when God answers prayer. Pray for each other’s requests out loud together as a group. If you’re new to group prayer, you may pray silently.

Prayer Requests

Praise Reports

3 The Captain and His Ship



What is the biggest and/or smallest boat/ship you've ever been on?

Do you have sea legs or are you a sea sick landlubber?

Play the "[Session Three: The Captain and His Ship](#)" video. Use the space below for notes, questions, or comments you'd like to discuss with the group.

// This is a difficult story in the story of God. This is a heartbreaking story. A devastating story. But also, a redemptive story, and promise-filled one.

— Jodi Hickerson



What stood out to you in the video?

Read [Genesis 6:1-22](#)

1. According to these verses, what was the problem with mankind? How was Noah different?
2. Define "grief." What do you think it means when the Bible says God grieved that He made human beings?
3. What would your reaction be if God asked you to build a boat to the specifications He gave to Noah?
4. Describe some details about a time when God asked you to do something that seemed ludicrous. Share the outcome with the group.
5. Why do you think Noah obeyed and said "yes" to God?

// By faith, Noah built a ship in the middle of dry land. He was warned about something he couldn't see, and acted on what he was told. The result? His family was saved. His act of faith drew a sharp line between the evil of the unbelieving world and the rightness of the believing world. As a result, Noah became intimate with God.

— Hebrews 11:7 (MSG)

Read [Hebrews 11:1-2, James 4:6-10, and 1 Peter 5:6-7](#)

6. What does it mean to "walk faithfully with God?"
 7. Share about a person you know who walks faithfully with God. How is their life different from others you know?
- Read [2 Corinthians 5:7](#)
8. Explain how walking and living faithfully with God translates into accomplishing great things for the kingdom of God.
 9. How can your Life Group pray for you to have humility and faithfulness in your journey with God?



Group: It is our desire to see the members of our Life Groups serve in their communities. Serving in your community is a way for you and your Life Group to be a light in your neighborhood. It is often noted, "Preach always, and if necessary, use words." The point is that we are walking witnesses of our relationship with Jesus as we become His hands and feet to the world.

There are the names, contact information, and descriptions of organizations with whom you can partner with on our website, lifegroups.org/impact. You will find a large range of ideas to serve in different areas of the city. Feel free to be creative. If you have an idea that is not listed, please contact us so we can share it with other Life Groups and help you bring your Community Impact Project to life.

You will find the Community Impact Project worksheet on [Page 78](#). This worksheet will help you organize your project and ensure it gets done. Have fun as you go out to be a blessing to others!

Individual: For some of you reading this, you may be wondering what is next, and what may be next is serving and leading at our church. Noah faithfully answered the call to build an ark for God. Noah may have felt scared or doubtful but he obeyed God and followed through on the plans God had for him. For you, it may be to lead a Life Group. It may be your turn to step out in faith and lead a group through a Bible-led discussion and watch them grow to become more like Christ! If this is you, text the word "Leader" to 818.626.5433 and get ready to go to a Life Group New Leader Training!

PRAYER AND PRAISE

This is a place where you can write each other's prayer requests, and make a note when God answers prayer. Pray for each other's requests out loud together as a group. If you're new to group prayer, you may pray silently.

Prayer Requests

Praise Reports

4 The Daughter and Her Basket



Share a television commercial that made you cry.

Share about the first time you remember feeling sorry for someone.

Play the "[Session Four: The Daughter and Her Basket](#)" video. Use the space below for notes, questions, or comments you'd like to discuss with the group.

// It's frustrating, because we can't fix it all or understand it all, or change it all... but, that doesn't mean we don't do anything. The truth is we can't do everything, but we can do something.

— Jodi Hickerson



What stood out to you in the video?

Read Exodus 1:1-2:10

1. Why do you think Pharaoh's daughter risked taking in this Hebrew baby? How do you think she was able to keep this information from her father and keep him from killing Moses?

2. Share some ways we can live out the kind of compassion that was shown by Pharaoh's daughter as she took in baby Moses.

3. Who in your neighborhood needs compassion today? What simple step can you take tomorrow to show compassion to that person or group?

4. What do you think Moses gained by growing up as a "royal?" How did Moses use these advantages in his older age?

5. List the ways in which God's plans intertwine with our human efforts. Like the story of Pharaoh's daughter, share a time when you had a major opportunity to do the right thing. What was the outcome?

6. This story of compassion is also a testimony of God's faithfulness. How does our faith and willingness to do what is right intertwine into God's plan of salvation for the whole world?

7. How is God able to change the world we live in by simple acts of compassion? What simple act could any Christian do?

8. What does this story teach us about the importance of one life? How can we, like Pharaoh's daughter, do whatever we can to ensure that every son and daughter has an opportunity to grow into a world-changer?

Read Exodus 4:10-17

9. What are the characteristics God is looking for to accomplish His mission?

10. Moses literally told God to "...please send someone else to do it." Why did Moses want to pass over his responsibility? List some ways you are able to empathize with Moses' timidity and fear.

11. Share a specific burden and conviction God has placed in your life in order to bring about change in the world. What action steps are you taking in fulfilling what God is calling you to do?

DEEPER STUDY QUESTIONS

Read *Isaiah 1:17, Micah 6:8, and Zechariah 7:9-10*

12. What is the common theme between these three passages?

13. What do these concepts of social justice teach us about the importance that God puts on life and justice for everyone, especially the “least of these?”

14. What kind of heart do you have for social injustices that you see all over our city, country, and world? Share with your group how your heart breaks for the things that break God’s heart.

15. What steps have you been able to take in order to undo those injustices? How might your Life Group pray to stir your heart to confront social injustices?

// Do for one what you wish you could do for everyone.

— Andy Stanley

NOTES



Group: There are many needs around us. This week, we want you and your group to pray about and consider sponsoring a child through Compassion International. Through a relationship with a local church and a caring sponsor, a child is able to discover his or her true value.

EVERY PENNY YOU GIVE GOES TO WORK FOR CHILDREN

Your contributions make an incredible difference in the lives of children in poverty.

Compassion is:

- a trusted Christian charity since 1952.
- providing hope and benefits to over 2 million registered children in poverty.
- a founding member of the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability and meets the standards of the Better Business Bureau Wise Giving Alliance.

Transparent financial accountability is just one reason to trust Compassion with your charitable donations, making it a top-rated Christian charity!

For \$38/month, a sponsored child receives:

LOVE – that unlocks the potential within their heart

EDUCATION – to defeat illiteracy and provide critical skills

SUPPLEMENTS – to protect against malnutrition

HEALTH CARE – to fight back against disease and sickness

CHRIST-CENTERED GUIDANCE – through a local church to overcome fear and hopelessness

RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES – to protect from crime, violence, and danger

For other information, please visit compassion.com

Individual: Shepherd Church now has a Foster/Adoption Care Ministry for anyone interested in participating on any level. We have loving people who have gone through the process of both foster and adoption of kids. They want to love and support those who are walking through their adoptive or foster care journey.

ADOPT! If you can't adopt, you can FOSTER! If you can't foster, you can MENTOR! If you can't mentor, you can SUPPORT! If you can't support, you can VOLUNTEER! If you can't volunteer, you can DONATE! If you can't donate, you can EDUCATE!

Please go to shepherdchurch.com/fosteradopt for more information and to get started on your journey of making this a better world for kids.

PRAYER AND PRAISE

This is a place where you can write each other's prayer requests, and make a note when God answers prayer. Pray for each other's requests out loud together as a group. If you're new to group prayer, you may pray silently.

Prayer Requests

Praise Reports

5 The Soldier and His Spoils



What is something you did as a kid that you were able to get away with?

As a kid, were you someone who got caught all the time or got away with everything?

Play the "[Session Five: The Soldier and His Spoils](#)" video. Use the space below for notes, questions, or comments you'd like to discuss with the group.

// Sin, especially sin that we bury, that we don't let anyone know, that we try to hide from God... that leads to all kinds of death and destruction and it not only affects us, but innocent people as well.

— Jodi Hickerson



Read Joshua 7:1-26

1. What was the cause of Israel's defeat at Ai? If you were an Israelite soldier, how would you have responded after losing such a significant battle?
2. Describe Joshua's response to the stunning defeat? How would you categorize his response (cowardly, angry, whining, surprised, etc.)?
3. How did God get Joshua and the Israelites back on track? What instructions did the Lord give to Joshua in order to find out who had disobeyed?
4. What exactly was Achan's sin? Why do you think Achan chose this path even though he knew what God commanded?
5. Share a time when you did something that you knew went against God's plan. How did that decision affect you and the people around you?
6. What happens in our hearts when we sin and try to hide it? What happens if that hidden sin festers over months or years?

// The sin you want to conceal the most is the sin you need to reveal the most... It's how we get well. It's how we grow. It's how we become the men and women that God created us to be.

— Jodi Hickerson

7. How did Achan's sin affect his whole family and community? Share how you have experienced the consequences of someone else's sin.

8. How could this story have been different if Achan had thought of others before acting selfishly?

9. How would this world be different if all people thought of others first and acted in their best interest before satisfying their own wants and desires?

Read Proverbs 28:13, Romans 6:23, James 5:16, and 1 John 1:9

10. How do these verses give hope to the promise of God's grace and mercy? Discuss how confessing our sin can bring a different perspective and open a new path for one's life.

11. Share about the person you confess to on a regular basis. How has this person helped you to experience the grace and love of God?

12. How can your Life Group pray for you this week to uncover your sin to live in God's light?

DEEPER STUDY QUESTIONS

Read Numbers 14:18

13. What does it mean when the Bible says that the sins of the father are passed down through generations? Give an example how you have seen this.

14. What consequences have you personally experienced from the sins of your parents or grandparents?

15. How does God make it possible for the rest of the family to escape the punishment that "the father" should receive?

Read 1 Corinthians 6:9-11

16. Describe these verses in your own words. How does the work of Christ and the Holy Spirit break the chain of sin handed down through generations?

17. How can we meet the mighty power of Jesus to break that chain and bring freedom to yourself and your family?

NOTES



Group: We will be doing a group exercise this week that is unlike anything we have ever done. In an effort to experience love and grace from our sins, knowing full well that Jesus already paid for our sins, we want to encourage you to practice James 5:16: "Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective." This can be very difficult to do. If you are willing to participate in this exercise, this could be a powerful and liberating experience.

The group leader will hand out an index card or a piece of paper to each member. Write something you would like to confess to your Life Group but do NOT write your name. Maybe it is a sin that you have struggled with for a long time. Take a few minutes to think and pray. The idea is not to judge or be judged, but to experience grace, love, peace, and freedom.

Your Life Group leader will read each confession out loud and then you may choose to crumple up the paper and burn it as a visual example of God removing these offenses completely. "I, even I, am he who blots out your transgressions, for my own sake, and remembers your sins no more" (Isaiah 43:25). Take a minute to affirm everyone's identity in Christ. We are all guilty of something but we are all free in Christ Jesus as He loves us in our affliction. Before you finish this exercise, pray with one another, lifting each other up to the God who would rather die than live without you.

Individual: An amazing fact about Jesus is that He allows us to enter into His presence while feeling protected and loved. We may view ourselves unworthy of entering into His presence because of our own brokenness. This is where confession can help to better understand His love and grace towards us.

Confession is NOT telling God something He doesn't already know. God is omniscient, and He already knows everything. He knows everything you have ever thought, said, and done. God knows all of this, and despite all of it, He loves you. We don't have to pretend to move forward from this lesson as if everything is okay. We can be made complete by confessing our sin to God.

Take some time this coming week for a one-on-one with Jesus. Be honest with yourself and with God. Experience just how liberating it is to confess your hearts to God and allow His love, mercy and grace to envelop you.

PRAYER AND PRAISE

This is a place where you can write each other's prayer requests, and make a note when God answers prayer. Pray for each other's requests out loud together as a group. If you're new to group prayer, you may pray silently.

Prayer Requests

Praise Reports

6 The Posse and the Border Patrol



Do you prefer the new-fangled GPS or the good old paper map?

When you were growing up, were you better known as a leader or as a follower?

Play the "[Session Six: The Posse and the Border Patrol](#)" video. Use the space below for notes, questions, or comments you'd like to discuss with the group.

// [God] wants to guide us as Scripture says, 'with His eye upon us' ... but for that to happen we have to seek His face.

— Psalm 107:29



What stood out to you in the video?

Read Acts 16:6-10

1. According to this passage, what was Paul's plan and why did his plans change? How did Paul know to change his plans?
2. For what reason might Paul have refrained from changing his plans as he did, and instead continued on into Asia? What do you think would have happened if Paul hadn't followed the redirection of the Holy Spirit?
3. Discuss the significance of the Holy Spirit's guidance for Paul and his "posse."
4. Paul had very good, kingdom-expanding, and God-honoring plans to minister to millions of people in Asia. Explain why you are surprised by the change in the plans coming from the Holy Spirit.
5. Share a time when the Holy Spirit led you to change your plans. What was the result of your obedience or disobedience to the Spirit's leading?

Read John 14:16-17, 26, 15:26, 16:7-9, 13

6. Based on these verses, how would you describe the Holy Spirit to someone who has never heard of Him?
7. Make a list and discuss what Jesus says the Holy Spirit will do for people who believe. Share an experience that you had from this list.
8. Based on how the Holy Spirit intercepted the life of Paul in Acts 16 and with what you've discussed and learned in this lesson, how have you noticed the Holy Spirit take charge and affirm Himself in your life?

Read 1 Corinthians 2:9-16, 6:19-20, Galatians 5:16-18, 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14, and 1 John 3:19-24

9. How do these passages supply further evidence that being connected to the Holy Spirit will help guide you through life's decisions?
10. Describe the possible danger that believers could experience by not connecting regularly with the Holy Spirit and following His guidance.
11. Where is the Spirit of God leading you currently? What is the next step you need to take? How can your Life Group pray for you to make this happen?

DEEPER STUDY QUESTIONS

Read [Romans 8:5-11](#)

12. What does it mean to live according to the sinful nature? Describe some examples of what that might look like.

13. Describe the qualities of a person who lives according to the Spirit?

14. How have you experienced the Spirit help you in your weakness, intercede for you, search your heart, help you know the mind of God, and live by His will?

**// We can trust not only His vision, but trust His heart...
He loves you, wants what's best for you, that He hasn't
forgotten you, and will not bail on you.**

— Jodi Hickerson

NOTES



Group: This is a fun exercise that will allow you to experience trust in guidance as discussed in this lesson. Group up in pairs. One person's eyes will be closed and your partner will guide you around the house. The goal of the exercise is for you to trust your partner as you are guided by them through the house. This is a big responsibility, so be very careful as you guide your blinded friend.

This is a very simple exercise in trusting when we cannot see. Although we cannot see the Holy Spirit, when we spend time in prayer, study the Bible, and in time of worship, we feel the presence of God and feel or hear the Spirit's prompting. As you live day to day, stay eager to be guided by the Holy Spirit in a manner resembling this exercise; trusting the Holy Spirit when you can not see Him. "For we live by faith, not by sight" (2 Corinthians 5:7).

Individual: Start with your Bible closed and bring the focus of your mind and heart on Jesus. With your eyes closed, take a few deep breaths and center your mind on the love and presence of the Holy Spirit. As you settle your heart and mind on Him, ask Him to guide you through your Scripture reading. With your eyes still closed, open your Bible and place your finger on a page without intentionally trying to land in a certain area. If you have a study Bible with a lot of commentary notes, continue this process until your finger is on Scripture. Wherever your finger lands, begin to read.

Read very slowly, with your focus remaining on God and His guidance. At some point, you will come to a verse or phrase that sticks out to you. Stop reading once that happens. Read that verse or phrase a few of times, repeat it in your head or out loud. This is meditating on Scripture. Let your heart and mind dwell on that verse. After a few minutes of meditation on those words of God, respond to Him. Simply let your heart speak to God. This response is inspired by your reflection on the Word of God.

Rest on what God said to you during your time of meditation and let go of your own ideas and plans. Simply rest on the Word of God. Listen at the deepest level of your being to God, who speaks within you with a still small voice. As you listen, you will gradually be transformed from within. As the process of this transformation happens, it will have a profound effect on the way you live. Be encouraged that your regular meditation on the Living Word of God will help you to apply and live out His truths. "For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart" (Hebrews 4:12).

PRAYER AND PRAISE

This is a place where you can write each other's prayer requests, and make a note when God answers prayer. Pray for each other's requests out loud together as a group. If you're new to group prayer, you may pray silently.

Prayer Requests

Praise Reports

7 The Scribe and His Scrolls



What is one of the most memorable gifts you've ever received?

Explain your thoughts on re-gifting items.

Play the "[Session 7: The Scribe and His Scrolls](#)" video. Use the space below for notes, questions, or comments you'd like to discuss with the group.

“Here’s what we do ... start meshing together all the parts that make you uniquely you. Your personality, your experiences, your talents, abilities... and then let the supernatural gift flow through you as you live beyond yourself. We are all better for it.

— Jodi Hickerson



What stood out to you in the video?

1. From the video, share what you learned about scribes and their importance during the first century A.D.?

2. Based on the very limited information we have from Romans 16:22, what is your impression of Tertius and what do you think were some of his responsibilities?

3. How do you think Tertius used his gifts to expand the kingdom of God?

4. What other gifts and talents can believers use to make an impact in God's Kingdom even if the individual is relatively unknown to others?

Read Romans 12:1-8, 1 Corinthians 12:1-11, 12:27-31, Ephesians 4:11-12, and 2 Timothy 4:5

5. Make a list of spiritual gifts based on these passages.

6. According to 1 Corinthians 12:15-20, no one gift or member of the body is more important than another. All are equally needed. How have you seen or experienced someone prioritizing one spiritual gift higher than another?

7. What are the dangers of God's people selfishly exercising their spiritual gifts? What are the benefits of exercising spiritual gifts in love?

8. According to Paul in these passages, where should your spiritual gifts be used and for what purpose?

9. Have you ever taken a spiritual gifts test? Share your spiritual gift with your group.

10. How are you using your spiritual gifts in the church? What have you learned about yourself and the gifts you've been given?

11. In what ways has God transformed you as you've used your spiritual gifts?

“God has given gifts to each of you from his great variety of spiritual gifts. Manage them well so that God's generosity can flow through you.

— 1 Peter 4:10 (NLT)

8 The Fisherman and His Dreams



What dream has inspired you or what nightmare has haunted you?

Share a time when you interacted with someone who spoke a different language. What was the experience like? How did you communicate?

Play the "[Session Eight: The Fisherman and His Dreams](#)" video. Use the space below for notes, questions, or comments you'd like to discuss with the group.



What stood out to you in the video?

Read Acts 10:9-16

1. What was the message from Peter's vision that he had a difficult time receiving?

Read Leviticus 11:4-7, 13-19, and 29-30

2. Keeping in mind the restrictions from the Old Testament, how do you think Peter felt when he heard the voice order him to "Get up, kill and eat" these animals?

3. What did it mean for Peter, as a law-abiding Jew, to go against these restrictions?

4. Why did God remove these restrictions and laws when He put them in place?

5. What are some principles or beliefs you hold that have limited your ability to reach out to people who are "different" from you? What would your life look like if you moved beyond those limits?

6. How do we uncover the principles or beliefs that keep us from sharing the gospel or the love of Jesus with others?

Read Matthew 11:19, Mark 1:40-45, 2:13-17, Luke 15:1, and John 4:4-9

7. How does Jesus act against the expectations of society at His point in history?

8. Why do you think the people in these passages wanted to be near Jesus? Why was Jesus unafraid to be near these people and actually welcomed them?

9. What kind of people make you nervous or afraid? Why? What is threatening about this group of people?

10. How do the actions of Jesus encourage you to let go of your fears and reach out to "different" people? How would we benefit in our church and in our community if we dropped our fear of others?

11. How can your Life Group pray for you to share Jesus with someone who is different from you?

// In this new life, it doesn't matter if you are a Jew or a Gentile, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbaric, uncivilized, slave, or free. Christ is all that matters.

— Colossians 3:11

LIFE GROUP ROSTER

Use this page to write down the names and contact information of your group members.

Name: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Name: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Name: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Name: _____

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LIFE GROUP AGREEMENT

It's a good idea for every group to put words to their shared values, expectations, and commitments. Such guidelines will help you avoid unspoken agendas and unmet expectations. We recommend that you discuss your guidelines in order to lay the foundation for a healthy group experience. Feel free to modify anything that does not work for your group. If the idea of a written agreement is unfamiliar to your group, we encourage you to give it a try.

We agree to the following values:

Clear Purpose To encourage and challenge each other to live the life that God has called us to live (John 10:10 and Matthew 28:18-20)

Group Attendance To give priority to the group meeting (call if I am going to be absent or late)

Safe Environment To help create a safe place where people can be heard and feel loved (no quick answers, snap judgments, or simple fixes)

Confidentiality To keep anything that is shared strictly confidential and within the group.

Spiritual Health To give group members permission to help me live a healthy, balanced spiritual life that is pleasing to God.

Welcome Newcomers To invite our friends who might benefit from this study and warmly welcome newcomers.

Building Relationships To get to know the other members of the group and pray for them regularly.

We have also discussed and agree on the following items:

Childcare _____

Starting Time _____

Ending Time _____

LIFE GROUP CALENDAR

Healthy groups share responsibilities and group ownership. It might take some time for this to develop. Shared ownership ensures no one person has responsibility for the group. Use the calendar to keep track of social events, mission projects, birthdays, or days off. Complete this calendar at your first or second meeting. Planning ahead will increase attendance and share ownership.

Date	Lesson	Location	Leader	Food
Monday, February 7	Week 2	Steve and Laura's	Bill Jones	John and Alice

BECOMING A LEADER

What does it take to be a leader?

- Have a heart for people.
- Open to having people in your home.
- Serve some coffee or soft drinks.
- Tell others about the group!

Basically, you need to have a desire to apply the Bible to your life and want to share that with others. The group does not have to meet at your home, and you do not have to have a Bible college degree to lead. You simply must have some basic people skills and a desire to grow in the Lord.

How can you become a leader?

First, you do have to be a member of Shepherd Church. To be a member, you must complete the "101 - Saved in Christ" class. These classes are usually about two hours long, and are offered every two months. You may call the church office at 818.831.9333 to find out when the next one will be held. You may also visit: shepherdchurch.com/member

Second, you need to sign-up for the New Life Group Leader Training. It is a two-hour training and orientation on Life Groups. Here you will learn the philosophy of Life Groups and how to effectively begin leading a group. Completing this course does not obligate you, but does allow you to become a new leader. To register online and find more information, please visit: lifegroups.org/leader

BLESSING LIST

The Blessing List is an opportunity to intentionally pray for people who don't know Jesus as their Lord and Savior. The greatest blessing anyone can receive is to be in relationship with the living God! Throughout the series, pray for God's Spirit to bless and reveal Jesus' love to each person listed.

Name

Name
