

GROUP LEADER GUIDE (Week: 10/3-10/10) – Vision: Whole Hearts

Sermon Text: Philippians 1:12-21 / Sermon Title: “Christ is Our Life”

BIG Idea: *Our pursuit of wholehearted love for Jesus Christ is not a Sunday only pursuit, but an every minute, every moment pursuit.*

Focus this week: fellowship and relationship comfortability is still the focus this week. Be sure to spend plenty of time getting to know each other and grow in comfortability with one another. This is why it helps to have icebreakers, food, music, etc. at the beginning of your meeting. This will pay dividends in the later months.

FELLOWSHIP TIME (15 minutes)

Be sure to plan out some way to implement casual fellowship time as people come to your group.

STARTING OFF THE NIGHT (15 minutes)

After the fellowship time at the beginning of your meeting, have everyone find their seats and start off with an icebreaker. You can use one of the icebreakers from the leader resource page found here:

<https://lifewayresearch.com/2020/02/19/75-icebreaker-questions-for-church-small-groups/>

Pow’s and Wow’s (a.k.a. “High’s” and “Low’s”): After you do the icebreaker, one thing you can do to start your group off each week is called “Pow’s and Wow’s”. Have each person go around and share a “pow” (a low moment from the past week) and a “wow” (a high point moment from the last week). This can also be a great way to learn how you can pray for one another.

DISCUSSION (45 minutes)

Start discussion by saying, “This past Sunday we discussed the second emphasis of the renewed mission of Church at Bergen: Pursuing *lives*. We learned that the pursuit of greater joy in Christ and love for Christ Christian life is an every minute, every moment pursuit. Our bodies are instruments in the hand of God to make much of Jesus Christ. Wherever we are, Christ is; and wherever Christ, he is Lord.”

1. Before we get into the specifics of the sermon text in Philippians 3, was there anything from last week’s sermon that either encouraged, challenged, or helped you grow in love for Jesus Christ? *Again, this question is the most open-ended question which makes it easy for people to get comfortable using their voices. Remember to just let people talk here, so resist the urge to fill empty silence. This always takes initial warming up to.*
2. This past Sunday we heard about a compartmentalized life. What is your understanding of a compartmentalized life? What are some of the perceived benefits and drawbacks of living a compartmentalized life? *According to Wikipedia, the definition of “psychological compartmentalization” is a “psychological defense mechanism in which thoughts and feelings that seem to conflict are kept separated or isolated from each other in the mind. It may be a form of mild dissociation; example scenarios that suggest compartmentalization include acting in a way that logically defies one’s own moral code or dividing one’s unpleasant work duties from one’s desires to relax. Its purpose is to avoid cognitive dissonance, or the mental discomfort and anxiety caused by a person having conflicting values, cognitions, emotions, beliefs, etc. within*

themselves.”¹ *The purpose of talking about the benefits and drawbacks is so that we don't assume that compartmentalization is only a bad thing, when the only bad thing is **when we try to compartmentalize Jesus.***

3. Why do you think we might want to compartmentalize Jesus? *There could be a lot of reasons why we do this, so let the people share their thoughts before chiming in. The reasons we do this could be the following: 1) to not let Jesus infringe on an idol or sin in our life, 2) to maintain a sense of control over your life, 3) to not feel guilty for living our entire lives only for ourselves but giving Jesus “two hours on a Sunday.”*
4. Have someone read **Philippians 1:12-21** and make observations as a group. You can say, “Let’s just take some time to simply look at the passage for silently for ourselves. Then after a minute or so we can share some things that stand out to us and why.” *This simply gives people an opportunity to actually interact with the Bible for themselves, rather than jump into discussion without reading the passage carefully.*
5. Have people read **Romans 12:1; 1 Corinthians 6:19-20; Romans 6:12-13**. Make sure they take notice of the theme of our bodies. Paul could have easily just referred to our “lives”, but instead he chooses to refer to our “bodies.” What do you think is the significance of the Bible talking about our *bodies* when living for the glory of Christ? *The Bible could be referring to our bodies in order to make clear that absolute claim that Jesus has on your life, and even the very body that you live in. It could also be pointing out the value that God places on our bodies as they are to be used for his glory.*
6. One of the major points of the sermon, based on Philippians 1:20, was **“Your body is an instrument in the hands of God Almighty to make much of Jesus. Wherever you are, Christ is; and wherever Christ is, he is Lord.”** How does this truth most personally relate to you in your life? Why? *The purpose of this question is to make sure that people let one of the major points “hit home” practically for them.*
7. The majority of the sermon was spent talking about how Christ is Lord over *every single area of your life*. The examples given in the sermon are listed below. Which of the following most personally landed on you as a place that needs more surrender to the Lordship of Jesus?
 - Work
 - Marriage
 - Dating
 - Parenting
 - Social Media & Internet
 - Food, Drink, Health & Fitness
 - Parenting
 - School
 - Self-care, Down time, “me time”
 - Budget & Spending
 - Body & Sex

PRAYER (15 minutes)

This is one of the most important things you can do for growing spiritually in your group. Always be sure to leave plenty of time to pray together as a group. ***Go around and have everyone share where they need prayer, then take plenty of time to pray for each person.***

¹ [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Compartmentalization_\(psychology\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Compartmentalization_(psychology))