

what life groups are all about

Life Groups are our main strategy for encouraging a life of following Jesus. These groups will be focused on learning four life-giving practices. These practices form the pattern of each group, and we will be sharing stories from our week of how these practices are growing in our lives:

- **Life-giving Prayer:** Prayer for the purpose of being with God rather than getting something from God. This kind of prayer is focused on God (The King) and what he is doing (building his Kingdom) rather than on what I want him to do for me. We often use the words “glory, honor, and thanks” from Rev. 4:9 to structure our time.
- **Life-giving Truth:** This is the practice of telling ourselves God’s truth over and over again so that it sinks into our hearts and changes us from the inside out. Practically, this means we will think through the truth which we learned in the Sunday Sermon. We will help each other process the truth of God’s Word together.
- **Life-giving Relationships:** This is an invitation to authenticity, being honest with yourself and others about what’s really going on in our hearts, clinging to the hope that God himself is able and willing to heal our brokenness as we seek him together. This is where learning the truths of grace and humility really will manifest itself. Being real is better than being perfect. Practically this means we will seek to pray for heart issues, not surface issues. For example, someone might want prayer for a job – he might be laid off. We want to know how we can pray for his heart – maybe he realizes that he is struggling with trusting God to care for him. And so we would pray God’s will in this area.
- **Life-giving Impact:** Prayer is the work! We use the pattern of “Pray & Watch” – where we pray for those all around us and then watch for how God is working in their lives. When we see the Lord working, then we both rejoice and respond.

Life Groups are what we do during the week—we don’t have other programs. So if you want to be involved beyond Sunday morning, this is for you! We have men’s, women’s, teen’s, and couples’ groups meeting. And if you want to learn more about these Four Life-giving practices and how they work, tell us you are interested in being part of our 4 week “Getting to know LEFC” where we share about these practices, our mission, and our values.



For the week starting Sunday,
Sept 11th, 2016

The Bible is Trustworthy

I John 1:1-4

Life-giving Prayer (about 10 min)

1. Do you have any stories to share this week about worshiping God in the everyday stuff of life?

2. Try using the simple sentences below, filling in the blank. You could spend a bit of time on “glory”, people completing the sample sentence as many times as they want. Then move onto “Honor” and then “Thanks”.

Glory: God, it’s amazing that you _____.

Honor: God, I choose (or want or surrender) _____ to you.

Thanks: God, thank you for _____.

3. Look at the bulletin from Sunday. Go through the Scripture or a song and see if you can pick out statements that give God glory, honor, or thanks.

Life-giving Truth (about 45-55 min)

There are a lot of questions here. Your Life Group Coach will pick out a few below that are best suited for your Life Group to help process this week's Life-giving Truth. Don't try to answer every question – just think through a few together.

1. Did you think about last week's truth *God is merciful to me* last week? As you look back on the week, how did or might have this truth changed your perspective?
2. What was one thing you learned from the sermon on Sunday?
3. What was one question you have from the sermon on Sunday?
4. Read through 1 John 1:1-4. What or who is John writing about when he says "what which"?
5. Do you know anyone who challenges your belief in the Bible? What have they said to you?
6. When you think of the Life-giving truth, "The Bible is Trustworthy", are there certain things about the Bible that make you reluctant to say it's completely trustworthy in all it says and affirms?
7. Imagine you hear a preacher say, "That old song, '*Jesus loves me this I know, for the Bible tells me so*' is a big problem. The Bible has lots of errors. Yes, it contains truth, but it's not *all* truth. If you believe something because the "Bible says it" your faith is going to tumble like a house of cards when you learn the facts of science and history. So get rid of this "The Bible says it" belief. You don't need it. Your faith is more vibrant without it. Christianity does not exist because of the Bible any more than you exist because of your birth certificate. Your birth certificate documents something that happened. I myself love the Bible, but my faith doesn't rest on the Bible and neither should yours." What do you think of this? Do you see any problems with this logic?
8. Here's a couple of other places in the New Testament that shows the authors are self-aware that they are writing Scripture:

First, look up 2 Peter 3:14-16. How does Peter here show that he regards Paul's writings on the same level as Old Testament Scripture?

Second, look up 2 Timothy 5:17-18. Use the cross-references in your Bible to find out where these two quotes come from. What is the implication if Paul calls both quotations "Scripture"?

Third, look at what the Apostle Paul says in 1 Corinthians 14:37-38. What kind of authority does the Apostle Paul see in himself?

9. Read our EFCA statement of Faith #2: *We believe that God has spoken in the Scriptures, both Old and New Testaments, through the words of human authors. As the verbally inspired Word of God, the Bible is without error in the original writings, the complete revelation of His will for salvation, and the ultimate authority by which every realm of human knowledge and endeavor should be judged. Therefore, it is to be believed in all that it teaches, obeyed in all that it requires, and trusted in all that it promises.* How is the last sentence that was underlined a logical outcome of what comes before? Do you think the last sentence could still be true if our Statement of Faith instead said, "*The Bible contains some of the words of God. Though there are errors, the message about Jesus is still rich and wonderful*"?

Life-giving Relationships (about 5-10 min)

If we have prayed for you in the past weeks, have you seen any way, small or large, that God is healing you?

Does anyone want healing prayer this week? Remember, this is praying for the heart of you, the person, not the circumstances you are going through or other people in your life. Is there anything churning in your heart that we can pray for?

Life-giving Impact (about 10 min)

1. Does anyone have any Pray & Watch stories from this week? Did you make a plan and follow through with getting together with anyone on your Pray & Watch list?
2. Get your Pray & Watch list. Let's spend our last minute or two together praying over all these names together.