

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,
November 6th, 2016

Love Grows in the Crucible of Suffering

Romans 12:9-21, week 2

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. Last week's truth: Did you think about last week's Life-giving Truth *Love Grows in the crucible of suffering*? Was there a situation in your life this week when this Life-giving Truth was (or could have been) applicable?
2. Read through Romans 12:9-21. Pick one of the verses (any verse) from Romans 12:9-21. Discuss how pride would hamper following the commands in that verse. And then discuss how humility would help follow the commands in that verse.
3. What was one thing that you learned from the teaching on Sunday?
4. What was one thing that you had a question or concern from the teaching on Sunday?
5. What is it about the Gospel that is so incompatible to pride?
6. Reread this quote from Pastor Tim Keller that was read in the sermon on Sunday: ***Have you ever thought about the fact that you do not notice your body until there is something wrong with it? When we are walking around, we are not usually thinking how fantastic our toes are feeling. Or how brilliantly our elbows are working today. We would only think like that if there had previously been something wrong with them. That is because the parts of our body only draw attention to themselves if there is something wrong with them. The ego often hurts. That is because it has something incredibly wrong with it. Something unbelievably wrong with it. It is always drawing attention to itself – it does so every single day. It is always making us think about how we look and how we are treated. People sometimes say their feelings are hurt. But our feelings can't be hurt! It is the ego that hurts – my sense of self, my identity. Our feelings are fine! It is my ego that hurts.*** Do you think Keller is right that our ego hurts because something is wrong with it?
7. The Life-giving truth we are thinking about is *Love Grows in the Crucible of Suffering*. But suffering usually increases how much we think about ourselves! So how is it possible that God could use suffering to actually make us think *less* about ourselves?

8. Imagine you are having a conflict with someone in your church. Pride finds fertile ground in conflict. Read Romans 12:16 – how could the commands in this verses help people work through conflict in love?

9. God has designed the church to be a place where we learn to grow in love. And yet we Christians easily get distracted by our rights, preferences, and how people treat us. And our ego gets bruised. And we want to flee the hardships. How might Romans 12:10 (or any of the other verses in this passage) help a person persevere in love through the hardships of church life?

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.