

Leadership Tip!

One of the most important ingredients to being a successful life group leader is to focus on the people and not the content. Strive to create an environment that emphasizes authentic relationships in your group.

WALKING DEAD – NO CONDEMNATION**STARTER QUESTIONS:**

When you think of oppression (maybe as represented in a movie like *The Hunger Games* or the classic novel *1984*), what visual picture do you get?

If someone was wrongly condemned for a crime they didn't commit, how might they feel when the record is finally set straight?

MAIN IDEA:

This series is all about how God helps us avoid things that suck the life out of us like exhaustion, worry, and fear; things that can cause us to walk through life in a zombie-like state like the lost souls on the popular series *The Walking Dead*. God, through Jesus Christ, gives us a life that can be marked by peace and serenity, one in which we are grateful to have been rescued from oppression.

This week we are talking about breaking the feeling of condemnation before a holy God and replacing it with the Truth of Romans 8 – “No condemnation.” Romans chapter 8 is all about how God takes us from being stone-cold dead in sin to absolutely alive in Christ. This removal of condemnation allows us to live life to the fullest. We can feel worthy in God's sight, not because we're perfect but because He is.

Before jumping into Romans, read this scripture...

KEY SCRIPTURE:

“All glory to God who is able to keep you from stumbling, and who will bring you into his glorious presence innocent of sin and with great joy.” Jude 1:24 (NLT)

Just where does condemnation come from?

Paul was human and a sinner just like us...

"I don't really understand myself, for I want to do what is right, but I don't do it. Instead, I do what I hate... I have discovered this principle of life—that when I want to do what is right, I inevitably do what is wrong. I love God's law with all my heart. But there is another power within me that is at war with my mind. This power makes me a slave to the sin that is still within me. Oh, what a miserable person I am! Who will free me from this life that is dominated by sin and death?"

Romans 7:15-24 (NLT)

So, since we are all sinners, God could condemn us... if he wanted to. But Romans tells us he doesn't want to...

"Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus." Romans 8:1 (NIV)

If it's not from God, it must be from...

"...the accuser of our brothers and sisters... the one who accuses them before our God day and night." Revelation 12:10 (NLT)

Satan's name in Hebrew is, "Accuser" or, "Adversary," and he is good at what he does. He is relentless. BUT, you can overcome him by the power of God's Word, like Jesus Christ did when tempted in the wilderness.

ENGAGE AUTHENTICALLY: Do any of you struggle with an inner voice that replays self-condemning statements?

Like Paul, we often do the wrong thing at the wrong time. We sin. Our conscience tells us we've done something wrong, and we feel conviction or condemnation.

- 1. What is the difference between conviction and condemnation?**
 - God convicts us to alert us.
 - Satan condemns us to confuse us.
- 2. What is an appropriate response to God's conviction? What is an appropriate response to Satan's condemnation?**
- 3. What are some steps you can take to replace a condemning inner voice with God-glorifying statements?**

FINAL THOUGHTS:

Are you still struggling with righteousness?

It may seem presumptuous, haughty, or arrogant to think we are righteous before God. But the alternative is worse. The world often tells us we are unworthy, stupid, worthless, and often worse... would Jesus have made such a sacrifice for us if God really thought that of us?

How can our group pray for you?

Read this scripture as a group:

"What great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!" 1 John 3:1 (NIV)

CLOSE IN PRAYER

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURE:

Romans 7:25

2 Corinthians 5:21

WALKING DEAD
“No Condemnation”

“All glory to God who is able to keep you from stumbling, and who will bring you into his glorious presence innocent of sin and with great joy.” Jude 1:24 (NLT)

Satan’s name in Hebrew: Accuser

“...the accuser of our brothers and sisters... the one who accuses them before our God day and night.” Revelation 12:10 (NLT)

Faith is leaning into God’s reality instead of the Devil’s ridicule!

*“Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.”
Romans 8:1 (NIV)*

“THEREFORE...”

“I don’t really understand myself, for I want to do what is right, but I don’t do it. Instead, I do what I hate... I have discovered this principle of life—that when I want to do what is right, I inevitably do what is wrong. I love God’s law with all my heart. But there is another power within me that is at war with my mind. This power makes me a slave to the sin that is still within me. Oh, what a miserable person I am! Who will free me from this life that is dominated by sin and death?” Romans 7:15-24 (NLT)

“Thank God! The answer is in Jesus Christ our Lord.” Romans 7:25 (NLT)

God's Game-Changers vs. 5 Debilitating Feelings:

(Romans 7) We feel...	(Romans 8) God says...	We have...
Guilty	"No condemnation" (vs. 1-4)	<u>Liberty</u>
Stuck	"No frustration" (vs.5-17)	Victory
Overwhelmed	"No desperation" (vs. 18-30)	<u>Expectancy</u>
Confused	"No misperception" (vs. 28)	Certainty
Disconnected	"No separation" (vs. 31-39)	<u>Security</u>

"...NO CONDEMNATION..."

There's a big difference between condemnation and conviction.

"...IN CHRIST JESUS."

"God made Him who had no sin to be sin so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God." 2 Corinthians 5:21 (NIV)

"What great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!" 1 John 3:1 (NIV)

Application: Replace self-condemning statements with God-glorifying statements.