

4 WEEKS



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# HIDE AND SEEK



## SMALL GROUP STUDY

### Kicking it off:

Share about the best game of hide and seek you ever played. Did you have secret hiding place where no one could find you?

### Big Idea:

God's heart is to seek those who are lost.

### Key Scriptures:

Genesis 3:8-10

*"Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the Lord God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the Lord God among the trees of the garden. But the Lord God called to the man, "Where are you?" He answered, "I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid."*

Isaiah 53:6

*"We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all."*

Luke 15:3-6

*"Then Jesus told them this parable: "Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. Doesn't he leave the ninety-nine in the open country and go after the lost sheep until he finds it? And when he finds it, he joyfully puts it on his shoulders and goes home. Then he calls his friends and neighbors together and says, 'Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep.'"*

Jeremiah 29:13

*"You will seek me and you will find me if you seek me with all your heart."*

John 10:11

*"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep."*

### Discussion:

The heart of God is always bent toward those that are lost. Throughout Scripture we see His willingness to earnestly seek, and as Jesus' followers we are to seek and save the lost as well.

1. Read Genesis 3:8-10. What reason did Adam give for

hiding from God? Share ways that you have or do hide from God in your own fear or shame.

2. Discuss why God might have asked "where are you?" when He knew full well where Adam and Eve were.
3. Read Isaiah 53:6 and Luke 15:3-6. In these passages, both Isaiah and Jesus compare us to sheep, who can often be somewhat dull creatures who need looking out for. How does that apply to us?
4. What do you learn in these two passages about the Father's provision for the sheep? Share how that has impacted you personally, and if possible, share about a time you were "lost" and Jesus came after you.
5. Read Jeremiah 29:13. Would you say you are currently more hiding from God or seeking Him? Explain.
6. As followers of Christ, and those who have been "found", we are then called to be God's instrument of seeking others who may be hiding from Him. In what ways is God calling you to live that out?
7. Read John 10:11. How does the fact that Jesus laid down

His life for you impact your life from day to day?

### **Wrapping It Up:**

Spend some time praying together, giving thanks for our Good Shepherd and praying for those you know who are lost sheep.

### **Prayer Focus:**

Pray for our Love on Liberty campaign as we seek to bless the families and teachers at Liberty Elementary School.

### **Memory Verse:**

*"We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all."*

**Isaiah 53:6**



# MISSED OPPORTUNITY

## SMALL GROUP STUDY

### Kicking it off:

What's the most crucial conversation you wished you hadn't missed?

### Big Idea:

We are called to make the most of every opportunity we are given to share the message of God's salvation with others.

### Key Scriptures:

Acts 16:13-15

*"On the Sabbath we went outside the city gate to the river, where we expected to find a place of prayer. We sat down and began to speak to the women who had gathered there. One of those listening was a woman from the city of Thyatira named Lydia, a dealer in purple cloth. She was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to respond to Paul's message. When she and the members of her household were baptized, she invited us to her home. "If you consider me a believer in the Lord," she said, "come and stay at my house." And she persuaded us."*

Acts 16:29-34

*"The jailer called for lights, rushed*

*in and fell trembling before Paul and Silas. He then brought them out and asked, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" They replied, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved—you and your household." Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all the others in his house. At that hour of the night the jailer took them and washed their wounds; then immediately he and all his household were baptized. The jailer brought them into his house and set a meal before them; he was filled with joy because he had come to believe in God—he and his whole household."*

Acts 18:7-8

*"Then Paul left the synagogue and went next door to the house of Titius Justus, a worshiper of God. Crispus, the synagogue leader, and his entire household believed in the Lord; and many of the Corinthians who heard Paul believed and were baptized."*

Isaiah 52:7

*"How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of the messenger who brings good news, the good news of peace and salvation, the news that the God of Israel reigns!"*

## Discussion:

1. This week's message centered around the importance of cultivating relationships with people who are far from God in order that you might be able to share Jesus' love and truth with them. Read the Acts passages above and discuss how Paul connected with unbelievers in the situations that God provided.
2. Notice how it was not just individuals, but entire households, or what we would call "networks", who were transformed by the message of Christ. Discuss what "networks" in which you've been given influence. How might you begin to live out and share your faith in those situations?
3. Pastor Jeff spoke of five areas for us to be readied to share His truth: 1) heart 2) feet 3) hands 4) mouth and 5) spine (backbone). Which area is a strength for you? Which would you like to grow in?
4. Authentic spiritual growth always leads to great passion and concern for lost people. On a scale of 1-10, where would you rate your heart when it comes to passion for those who are far from God?

- No matter where you are on the scale, stop right now and pray together as a group that God would increase your passion in this area, making your heart tender toward those who are lost, and giving you courage to share.
5. Read Isaiah 52:7. Share with your group who was the messenger who share the good news of peace and salvation with you?
  6. Who's your one? That one person that God has laid on your heart to pray for and with whom to share His love and truth?

## Wrapping It Up:

Close your time together by praying for each person that you identified to pray for that you might be a messenger of good news to them.

## Prayer Focus:

Pray for the safety of kids and teachers as schools begin to open.

## Memory Verse:

*"How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of the messenger who brings good news, the good news of peace and salvation, the news that the God of Israel reigns!"*  
Isaiah 52:7



# VERBAL WITNESS



## SMALL GROUP STUDY

### Kicking it off:

Share your favorite subject to share with others. Latest happenings in sports? A great sale? Favorite fishing or camping spot? Market tips?

### Big Idea:

Sharing a verbal witness of the Gospel message is every believer's privilege and responsibility.

### Key Scriptures:

1 Peter 3:15

*"But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect..."*

Romans 10:14

*"Every one who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. But how can they call if they haven't believed? And how can they believe if they haven't heard? And how can they hear if no one has proclaimed?"*

2 Corinthians 4:7

*"But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us."*

John 4:29

*"Come and see a man who told me everything I ever did! Could he possibly be the Messiah?"*

Ephesians 6:19-20

*"Pray also for me, that whenever I speak, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should."*

### Discussion:

1. As we develop relationships with those who are far from God, we also will be given opportunities to share a verbal witness. Read 1 Peter 3:15. Discuss how you can be prepared to give an answer when you are asked about the hope you have in Christ.
2. Read Romans 10:14. Often people have the attitude that



it's up to the "professionals" to proclaim the message of Christ. Yet Scripture is clear that every believer is not only called, but equipped to share the hope they've been given. Discuss in your group the attitudes and beliefs that you've had when it comes to evangelism.

3. Read 2 Corinthians 4:7. No doubt you've felt ill equipped to share your faith at some point. Discuss how this passage can help you overcome your apprehension and shortcomings when it comes to sharing your faith.
4. Read John 4:29. This statement was proclaimed by the very first and least likely evangelist, the disreputable woman at the well. Yet, Jesus chose her to be the very first one with whom He would share that He was the Messiah. And she told everyone in her village! How might this impact your confidence in sharing the gospel with others?
5. Pastor Jeff shared four tips for sharing a verbal witness (acronym IDEA):
  - Initiate
  - Discern
  - Explain
  - Ask

Which one of these hangs you up most? Discuss how you can prepare yourself to engage in spiritual conversations with confidence.

### **Wrapping It Up:**

Pray Paul's prayer in Ephesians 6:19-20 for one another.

### **Prayer Focus:**

Pray for our Hope Center guests – that we can share the love and grace of Jesus with each and every one.

### **Memory Verse:**

*"But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect..."*

**1 Peter 3:15**



# THE ROLE OF THE CHURCH IN EVANGELISM



## SMALL GROUP STUDY

### Kicking it off:

Who was the first person to invite you to church?

### Big Idea:

Lost people matter to God; do they matter to me?

### Key Scriptures:

Matthew 28:19-20

*"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."*

John 1:40-46

*"Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, was one of the two who heard what John had said and who had followed Jesus. The first thing Andrew did was to find his brother Simon and tell him, "We have found the Messiah" (that is, the Christ). And he brought him to Jesus. Jesus looked at him and said, "You*

*are Simon son of John. You will be called Cephas" (which, when translated, is Peter). The next day Jesus decided to leave for Galilee. Finding Philip, he said to him, "Follow me." Philip, like Andrew and Peter, was from the town of Bethsaida. Philip found Nathanael and told him, "We have found the one Moses wrote about in the Law, and about whom the prophets also wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." "Nazareth! Can anything good come from there?" Nathanael asked. "Come and see," said Philip."*

### Discussion:

1. Read Matthew 28:19-20. Jesus left this Great Commission with His followers before He was taken up into Heaven, and it's meant for you and I as well. Has this been an integral part of your daily purpose? Discuss why or why not.
2. Our evangelism strategy at Sunnybrook is to develop relationships with unchurched people, share

a verbal witness, and invite them to church. Read John 1:40-46. Discuss how this relates to Jesus' disciples as they shared with others what they were experiencing with Jesus.

3. Is there anyone in your circle of influence that you have not yet invited to "come and see" by inviting them to church? Discuss what barriers may be keeping you from doing that.
4. Spend some time considering what it might feel like to come to Sunnybrook for the first time. What steps might you take to remove barriers for others to come?
5. "Come and see." It really can be as simple as that. Discuss in your group how you can contribute to making it a positive experience for every person who takes a step to "come and see".

### **Wrapping It Up:**

Take time to identify and pray for once again "the ONE" that each of you identified earlier in this series. If you've not yet invited them to church, invite them. And commit to continued prayer together for each one of them.

### **Prayer Focus:**

Pray for our Back to Church Sunday next week, that many will come and experience Jesus in fresh ways.

### **Memory Verse:**

*"Come  
and  
see,"  
said  
Philip."*

**John 1:46**



**NOTES:**



**NOTES:**



# Top 10 Tips for Leading a Small Group

1. Establish a welcoming, accepting, and safe environment.
  - Take time to prepare.
  - Make sure to give a warm enthusiastic greeting to each person.
  - Verbally communicate the environment that you hope to create.
  - Ephesians 4:1-3
2. On the opening night of your group you need to have some intentional discussions centered around these questions:
  - What is the purpose of our group?
  - What is the vision for our group?
  - What are your expectations?
  - What do you hope to gain from this group experience?
  - What are some things we value as a group?
  - What are some healthy guidelines we need to have in place?  
Review and sign a group agreement.
3. Be authentic. Spend time sharing your life stories in order to get to know each other on a deeper level.
4. Find a good balance between:
  - Truth and grace/Bible study and life
  - Encouraging and challenging one another
  - Giving and receiving feedback from each other
5. Ask good questions to stimulate good discussion. Use open ended questions and follow up questions.
6. Hang out together, do things socially, eat together and have fun together!
7. Develop a missional lifestyle, find a service project to do together in the community.
8. Raise up new leadership by rotating facilitation of the group.
9. Share the responsibilities in order to increase individual commitment and ownership of the group.
10. Pray for your group and for each other!

Find ways to celebrate what God is doing in your group! Who else could you invite to join you in order that their life may be impacted by what God is doing in your group?

# Group Agreement

## OUR PURPOSE

To transform our spiritual lives by cultivating our spiritual health in a healthy small group community. In addition, we: \_\_\_\_\_

## OUR VALUES

Group Attendance: To give priority to the group meeting. We will call or email if we will be late or absent.

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

Respect Differences: To be gentle and gracious to people with different spiritual maturity, personal opinions, temperaments, or imperfections. We are all works in progress.

Confidentiality: To keep anything that is shared strictly confidential and within the group, and to avoid sharing improper information about those outside the group.

Encouragement for Growth: To be not just takers but givers of life. We want to spiritually multiply our life by serving others with our God-given gifts.

Welcome for Newcomers: To keep an open chair and share Jesus' dream of finding a shepherd for every sheep.

Shared Ownership: To remember that every member is a minister and to ensure that each attender will share a small team role or responsibility over time.

Rotating Hosts/Leaders and Homes: To encourage different people to host the group in their homes, and to rotate the responsibility of facilitating each meeting.

## OUR EXPECTATIONS

- Refreshments/mealtimes \_\_\_\_\_
- Childcare \_\_\_\_\_
- When we will meet (day of week) \_\_\_\_\_
- Where we will meet (place) \_\_\_\_\_
- We will begin at (time) \_\_\_\_\_ and end at \_\_\_\_\_
- We will do our best to have some or all of us attend a worship service together.
- Our primary worship service time will be \_\_\_\_\_
- Date of this agreement \_\_\_\_\_
- Date we will review this agreement again \_\_\_\_\_
- Who (other than the leader) will review this agreement at the end of this study \_\_\_\_\_



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