

LIFE GROUP GUIDE
WEEK of SEPTEMBER 10-16

PREPARE:

Before your group arrives, make sure you take a few minutes to review the Life Group video and the Life Group Guide.

- It will help you be prepared for Life Group conversations ahead of time.
- Test your video display option to make sure it is working before your Life Group members arrive.

WELCOME:

Take a few minutes to welcome Life Group members.

- You are likely to have some new faces, so be sure everyone is introduced to everyone.
- If you have parents whose kids have started the new school year, provide a few minutes to share how they and their children are adjusting to the Fall schedule.

VIDEO:

Watch the video together

SCRIPTURE:

Read Philippians 2:12-18 together.

Philippians 2: ¹²Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, ¹³for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose. ¹⁴Do everything without grumbling or arguing, ¹⁵so that you may become blameless and pure, “children of God without fault in a warped and crooked generation.” Then you will shine among them like stars in the sky ¹⁶as you hold firmly to the word of life. And then I will be able to boast on the day of Christ that I did not run or labor in

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vain. ¹⁷ But even if I am being poured out like a drink offering on the sacrifice and service coming from your faith, I am glad and rejoice with all of you. ¹⁸ So you too should be glad and rejoice with me.

QUESTION:

Can you remember a time when you were in complete darkness?

- How did you feel?
- What happened?
- How did you get out of that darkness? (Did you find the light switch? Did you find your way out?)

QUESTION:

Why do you think people refer to painful and difficult seasons of their life as a dark time?

OBSERVATION:

Any time we are trying to EARN our salvation, we are still caught in a kind of darkness.

- Paul reveals that we are not to work FOR our salvation, but we can work OUT our salvation.

QUESTION:

What do you think some differences might be between working FOR your salvation and working OUT your salvation?

QUESTION:

If you are in darkness, would you prefer to go from pitch black to bright lights instantly, or would you prefer to have the light gradually become brighter? Why?

OBSERVATION:

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Paul reveals that God works in us in two ways.

- First, He places the desire or the “will” in us to make different choices or walk a different path.
- Second, God places the strength in us to “act” on those options.
- Both the desire and the ability to experience change are gifts from God.

QUESTION:

What problems might we run into if we believe that the desire to change or the ability to change comes from an individual rather than from God?

QUESTION:

If you know someone who needs to make some significant changes in their life, how would the truth that the desire and the ability to change comes from God, affect how you pray for the person?

- How might it affect how you talk to the person?

OBSERVATION:

Paul says one of the best ways to shine like a light in a dark world is to do everything without grumbling or complaining.

QUESTION:

Why is it so hard to get through a day without grumbling or complaining?

- How does it make you feel when you are grumbling or complaining?
- How do you feel when people around you are grumbling and complaining?

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- How do you think others around you, (including family) feel when you grumble and complain?

QUESTION:

What are some options or alternatives to grumbling and complaining?

QUESTION:

Paul states that people who act without grumbling or complaining shine like stars at night.

- What purpose or benefit do stars provide?

OBSERVATION:

Paul said he felt like his life was being poured out like a drink offering. Paul knew he would be sacrificed for proclaiming his faith in Christ. It is not likely that we will be called on to do the same in our culture. But, when you think about it, everything in life exists because of sacrifice.

- Musicians sacrifice time when they could be playing with friends, to practice.
- Athletes sacrifice by adhering to a strict diet and exercise program to keep their body strong.
- Parents sacrifice to see their children grow up in a safe and nurturing environment. Spouses sacrifice selfishness to invest into their partner.

In our world, there is no alternative to sacrifice that works.

- And what's more is that there is joy that comes out of that sacrifice.
- Audiences are moved with musical talent.
- Athletes bring joy to their teammates and their fans by bringing their best to the game.

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- Parents bring joy to their children – and parents experience joy when they see their children thrive.
- Spouses celebrate their time together.

One of the byproducts of sacrifice is joy.

QUESTION:

How can you learn to find joy when you feel like you are making a sacrifice?

- What do you have to notice or pay attention to?

QUESTION:

Do you believe the ability to experience joy in sacrifice helps you to shine like a light in a dark world? Why?

PRAYER:

Our world is a dark place. Our fear will not change our world, but our sacrifices can.

- Ask Life Group members to identify some sacrifices they are making and pray for God to use those sacrifices to bring light to dark places and to release joy.