

# **life groups' study guide**

## **ORANGE**



*Life Groups exist at Kingsway to provide authentic relationships for spiritual growth, caring for one another, and reaching out to others.*

## **Hope for the World**

### **Church = Yellow (Part 2)**

#### HOPE FOR THE WORLD : CHURCH

*" . . . you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light" (1 Peter 2:9).*

*"How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion, "Your God reigns!" Listen! Your watchmen lift up their voices; together they shout for joy. When the Lord returns to Zion, they will see it with their own eyes. (Isaiah 52:7-8) NIV*

*Back in May 2002 the Lilly Endowment sponsored a survey that involved interviews with 300,000 worshipers in 2,200 churches, representing 8 denominations. And they found that that 75% of churchgoers reported they came to church the first time because someone invited them. Yet 54 percent of those surveyed said they had not invited anyone to church in the past year.*

*(Pentecostal Evangel, June 23, 2002, pg. 11*

*Bill Bright, Founder of Campus Crusade for Christ, said, "Millions of surveys which we have helped to take around the world indicate that approximately 98 percent of the Christians do not regularly introduce others to the Savior." With so few believers actively sharing their faith, we must get back to the heart of Christ's mission and passion so that the Church can be the voice of truth to those who are lost. "There is nothing like the local church when it's working right. Its beauty is indescribable. Its power is breathtaking. Its potential is unlimited. It comforts the grieving and heals the broken in the context of community. It builds bridges to seekers and opens its arms to the forgotten, the downtrodden, and the disillusioned. It breaks the chains of addictions, frees the oppressed, and offers belonging to the marginalized of this world. The potential of the local church is almost more than I can grasp." (Bill Hybels)*

*The encounter of Zacchaeus and Jesus in Luke 9 teaches us five things we must do to reach people for Christ.*

- \* Jesus sought him (Luke 19:1-5)– We must be willing to go after people because they are

looking and screaming for hope and answers. It was Jesus looking for Zacchaeus more than Zacchaeus was looking for Jesus!

\* Jesus cared for him (Luke 19:5a) – We must care enough to find out more about them. Jesus called Zacchaeus by name. It is hard to tell someone what you know until you show them how much you care! (James 4:17) “*Therefore, to him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin.*”

\* Jesus fellowshiped with him - (Luke 19:5b-6) – We must be willing to go to them, into their homes, into their culture, into their circles while still being separate in our actions

\*Jesus shared the truth with him - (Luke 19:8-9) – We must be willing to say, “Thus saith the Lord!” They don’t need our opinions, nor our criticism they need truth!

\*Jesus taught him how to live and give - (Luke 19:8-10) – We cannot stop and salvation for the gospel is about making disciples that know how to live for Christ obediently and to give in Christ honestly!

*We exist to disciple people who become followers of Jesus Christ. Jesus taught Zacchaeus how to live honestly and how to give generously. We must teach new believers how to live for Christ. They are just like babies in a new world. They need those who have grown in Christ to show them the way. It is an eternal investment of your life into another. Jesus is our example in this. He went to where the thirsty individuals were. He met Peter at the docks... the woman of Samaria by the well, Matthew as he sat at his tax office, and scores of others while they were in the process of their daily pursuits. Jesus went to the people.*

### **We Are Called to be the Light of the World**

#### **There Is A Call To Answer (Matthew 5:14a)**

\*There is the call to *come to the light*. Jesus was and is the source of light. (John 3:19-20)

\*We are called to *receive the light*. It is not enough to merely be exposed to the light, we have a choice to respond to the light. We can either come to the light or reject the light. (John 1:12)

\*Once we have received the light then we are called to *walk in the light*. Paul reminds believers in Ephesians 5:8, John speaks to the same problem. (1John 1:5-7)

\*We are called to *reflect the light*. (John 9:5) (Philippians 2:14-16)

Q. Does your life reflect something different than what the world has?

#### **There Is A Testimony To Be Shared (Matthew 5:14b-15)**

Light is a visible and revealing influence. We are called to make a visible impact on the world around us. We cannot lose what we are but we can hide what we are, we can waste what we are. We cannot benefit the world if we are like the world. We cannot benefit the world unless we show them that there is a better way. Our mission is to be the light of the world and it is our choice whether we shine or hide. Jesus tells us what we are ...salt and light. Whereas salt is a hidden but powerful influence, light is a visible and revealing influence. We are called to make a visible impact on the world around us. We cannot lose what we are, but we can hide what we are and we can waste what we are.

Q. Why then were Christians placed in the world?

Q. If they are looking out only for themselves and we are looking out only for ourselves, what is the difference?

#### **There Is A Choice To Be Made (Matthew 5:16a)**

“*Let your light so shine before men...*” Evidently there is some choice involved because it says, “let” your light shine. What do we allow to hide our light? For some it may be fear. We may be like Joseph of Arimathea, a secret disciple. We are Christian’s but no one around us knows it. For some Christian’s there light is hidden under the basket of apathy. For some Christian’s there light is hidden

under the basket of silence. For some Christian's there light is hidden under the basket of inconsistency.

### **There Is A Purpose to be Considered (Matthew 5:16b)**

A lamp does not call attention to itself. We are not called to be magnificent chandeliers for the world to admire. We are called to be the little single bulb night light in the hallway to keep people from breaking their necks when they get up in the middle of the night! He called us to make a difference in the darkness!!!

Q. Why are we to be salt and light?

Acts 1:8; Mark 16:15; Romans 10:14; John 14:16; Proverbs 11:30; 2 Peter 3:9

### Differences between salt and light witnessing

Salt works and expands itself silently but you see it operating. Things are delicious without ever seeing the salt. You don't have to give a Bible study to be salt, your influence, your peace, your meekness your mercy. It only takes one to get it going. God is saying just give me one salt and I will affect the lives of many just one.

On the other hand light has a different type of effect. Light is visible it is seen it works openly. This is when you openly share your faith with others, when you share about God.

President Woodrow Wilson told a story of an encounter which reflected the light of a changed life. He said, "I was in a very common place, I was sitting in a barber chair, when I became aware that a powerful personality had entered the room. A man had come quietly in upon the same errand as myself to have his hair cut and sat in the chair next to me. Every word the man uttered, though it was not in the least moralizing, showed a personal interest in the man who was serving him. And before I got through with what was being done to me, I was aware that I had attended an evangelistic service, because Mr. D.L. Moody was in that chair. I purposely lingered in the room after he had left and noted the singular effect that his visit had brought upon the barber shop. They talked in undertones. They didn't know his name but they knew some-thing had elevated their thoughts, and I left that place as I should have left a place of worship." (J. David Hoke.)

Robert Lewis Stevenson - known for his adventure story *Treasure Island*, was in poor health during much of his childhood and youth. One night his nurse found him with his nose pressed against the frosty pane of his bedroom window. "Child, come away from there. You'll catch your death of cold," she fussed. But young Robert wouldn't budge. He sat, mesmerized, as he watched an old lamplighter slowly working his way through the black night, lighting each street lamp along his route. Pointing, Robert exclaimed, "See; look there; there's a man poking holes in the darkness." We are all called to poke holes in the darkness. The Lord has a mysterious way of using our light -- our songs, our words, our joy -- to penetrate the dark corners of other people's worlds.

The greater the darkness the more difference even the weakest light will make. We cannot live light-filled lives in our society without standing out, without having people notice us. They may not like us, and they may reject us; but they will know that we are there.

Q, What can I do to promote the gospel? Colossians 4:2-6

This quote by Charles H. Spurgeon painted a great mental picture of how our concern and love for the lost should be: "If sinners be damned, at least let them leap to Hell over our bodies. If they will perish, let them perish with our arms about their knees. Let no one go there unwarned and unprayed for."