

Devoted

Living deeply and widely in the family of God



Life Group Connection Guide

Seeks to help you dig deeper into God's Word on your own and aid in your discussion in a Life Group during the week. Follow the simple prompts below in a journal or together in a small group setting. If you would like to join a midweek Life Group, please contact: jon@neighborhoodchurch.com

Jan. 18 — Devoted to the Newness of Life from Baptism (Acts 8:26-40)

- **Welcome & Ice Breaker:**
 - Since baptism was talked about Sunday, what's a memorable time you were fully submerged in water? When did this happen? Where on earth did this take place? Was this a positive or negative experience?
- **Important Dates:**
 - Youth Groups Tuesday Evenings 7-8:30pm • Cypress Campus Gym
 - SHINE KIDS Returns January 21 @ 6:45-8:15pm • Cypress Campus Gym
- **Opening Prayers:**
 - Hold yourself before the Lord // Psalm 139:23
 - What emotions are you feeling as you come to Life Group?
 - Hold all of yourself out to Him and sit quietly • Allow God to come close to you & care for you in prayer right now • Listen for His voice/presence/leading
 - Hold what you are holding before the Lord // Psalm 90:17
 - What are you dealing with, working on, preparing for?
 - Hold it out to Him and sit quietly • Allow God to come close to you & establish the work of your hands • Listen for His voice/presence/leading
 - Return • Recommit • Repent • Reattach to the LORD who is with you // Psalm 139:24
 - Draw near to God as He draws near to you
 - "...I acquiesce to You Abba Father, to work and pray and seek Your own through me"
- **Scripture Passage: Acts 8:26-40**
 - Begin by reading the passage out loud; even a few times if it is a shorter passage in order to let it settle down inside you.
 - As the Scripture is being read, pay attention to any word, phrase, or feeling that the Holy Spirit may be highlighting to you.
 - Then share what you noticed and/or write down your observations as the Spirit leads.
- **Discussion/Personal Reflection**
 - What challenged you, or stood out to you during your devotional time with the Lord Jesus this week?

- If you were able to hear it, what did the Holy Spirit point out to you personally from Sunday's sermon?

- Read Romans 6:3-4. How does baptism mark a turning point into a new life devoted to Jesus? In Acts 8:36–39, the Ethiopian eunuch responds immediately to the gospel with baptism. In Romans 6, Paul explains baptism as participation in Christ's death and resurrection. What do you think this teaches us about baptism being more than a symbol? How is it a decisive break from the old life? How do you think this should shape a believer's daily devotion and obedience after baptism?

- Read John 8:31-32. How does the gospel free us in walking in the "newness of life" Jesus offers us after baptism? The eunuch first hears and understands the Scriptures (Acts 8:30–35) before being baptized. New life begins with truth and continues in it. Why do you think devotion to Scripture is essential for sustaining the new life we enter through baptism? How do you think ongoing learning guard us from returning to the old way of living?

- Read 2 Corinthians 5:17. What happens to us when we are baptized into Christ according to this verse? What does Christ offer us that no human can give? How does the truth of this "newness of life" transform how you view the world? Yourself? Your life? Your situations? What feels most hopeful now because of Christ's new work in you? What still feels difficult, but not despairing, as you walk in this newness of life?

- **Closing in Prayer:**

- Ministries/Missionaries: Faith in Christ Ministries
 - *FICM is located in South Los Angeles and run by Joe & Gwynn Brown who provides supportive services and outreach as they meet the immediate physical, spiritual and emotional needs to draw people to a deeper relationship and faith in Jesus Christ.*
 - *Please pray for men & women to step into leadership & for God to provide for the needs of the ministry.*
- Consider those who the Holy Spirit may be placing on your heart to pray for • Hold them up to the Lord for His intervening love in their lives • Allow Him to care for them through your prayer right now.
- *"Lord, who are You putting on my heart today? Who needs a special touch from You in their life? Who can I hold up to You in prayer?"*