



SERMON-BASED LIFE GROUP
PARTICIPANTS GUIDE – LIFE GROUP COVENANT



This covenant is reviewed and signed at the beginning of each fall and spring session by all groups. Group that are continuing still review the covenant during the first meeting of each 10-week session.

Session Dates _____ To _____

Leaders/Facilitators _____ Ph.# _____

Hosts _____ Ph.# _____

This covenant will help us discuss and clarify our goals, expectations, and commitments as a group. Since healthy groups thrive on trust and participation, a clear covenant is an important starting point toward a successful group experience.

LIFE GROUPS: THEIR PURPOSE

Life Groups exist to promote spiritual maturity and personal Life through meaningful Christian relationships and study of God's Word (Romans 8:29 & Hebrews 10:24, 25). We'll do this by focusing on four primary activities:

SHARE

Each week we'll take time to share what is happening in our lives. At first this sharing will include planned "sharing questions." But after the first few weeks, it will become more informal and personal as we feel more comfortable.

STUDY

Each week we'll study a section from God's Word that relates to the previous Sunday's sermon or an appropriate personal Life topic. Our goal is to learn how to live out our Christianity in everyday life. Our goal is to interact interpersonally on the topic and how we can practically follow Christ, not to answer all the questions.

SUPPORT

Each week we'll learn how to take care of one another as Christ commanded (John 15:9-13). This care can take many forms such as prayer, encouragement, listening, challenging one another, and meeting real needs.

SERVE

Spiritual Life is fostered not only by what we gain through the support and input of others, but also through service to others. The role each of us fills is important to the health of the church and for us to be the hands and feet of Jesus to our community (Ephesians 4:11-16). Throughout the year, it is our hope that you can find and/or be affirmed in the ways God has designed you to serve, and make a difference in God's Kingdom. Opportunities may arise in which your Life Group can do a missions project together as a means of fostering Life and serving God's world.



FIVE MARKS OF A HEALTHY GROUP

For our group to be healthy, we need to . . .

1. Make spiritual Life our number one priority (Romans 8:29).

2. Accept one another in love as Christ has loved and accepted us (Romans 15:7).

3. Take care of one another without falling into paternalism – taking inappropriate responsibility for solving the problems of others (John 13:34).

4. Treat each other with respect in words and actions (Ephesians 4:25-5:2).

Please Consider:

Listening:

Giving Advice:

Gabbing:

Gossip:

Put-Downs:

Confidentiality:

5. Keep our commitments to the group – including attending regularly, doing the homework, and keeping confidences whenever requested (Psalm 15:1-2, 4b).





GUIDELINES & COVENANT

1. Dates

We'll meet on _____ nights for _____ weeks. Our final meeting of this session will be on _____.

2. Time

We'll arrive between _____ & _____ and begin the meeting at _____. We'll spend approximately _____ minutes in singing (optional), _____ minutes in study/discussion, and _____ minutes in prayer/sharing.

3. Children

Group members are responsible to arrange child care for their children. Nursing newborns are welcome provided they are not a distraction to the group. You will find not having children at the group will foster a greater group experience.

4. Study

Our studies will focus on the same topic covered in the previous Sunday's sermon or an appropriate personal Life topic. Our goal is to learn how to live out our Christianity in everyday life.

5. Prayer

Our group will be praying each week for one another and any specific requests made.

6. Homework & Attendance

Joining a Life Group requires a commitment to attend each week and do the homework ahead of time. Obviously, allowances are made for sickness, vacation, work conflicts, and other special events—but not much more! This commitment is the key to a healthy group!

Most weeks, the homework will require approximately 20 (rarely more than 30) minutes to adequately prepare for the group study and discussion.

If I/we cannot come to a meeting, I/we will call _____.

7. Refreshments/Appetizers

Sometimes the host will offer to serve refreshments. Other times groups will have a schedule of who will bring desserts/refreshments. _____ will organize the list for refreshments.

8. Social & Service Project(s)

We will commit to at least 1 social event (in which all family may participate – children too) and/or service project per 10-12 week session.

9. The TEN "I Will" COMMITMENTS

1. I will make this group a priority by attending each week, keeping up with my assignments, and participating openly in discussion.
2. I will commit and contribute to the life of the church through the stewardship of my time, talent, and treasure, and the inviting of others.
3. I will strive to build authentic relationships with those in this group by showing care, providing encouragement, and praying for their needs.

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4. I will keep in confidence all sensitive issues brought up in my group.
5. I will explore honestly my steps for spiritual growth.
6. I will be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to get angry.
7. I will hold up my Life Group members in prayer each week.
8. I will *serve* together with my Life Group once a semester (service project – No Life Group meeting this week).
9. I will *play* together with my Life Group once a semester (social event – No Life Group meeting this week).
10. If a member of my Life Group encounters a significant life change, obstacle, or emergency, I will come to their aid through prayer, visits, and tangible ministries of mercy.

If we agree together in Christ to honor this covenant, write your names in the “Facilitators Life Group Covenant Form” (To be decided by each person on or before the third week.)

