



LifeGroup Guide

"We were promised sufferings. They were part of the program. We were even told, 'Blessed are they that mourn,' and I accept it. I've got nothing that I hadn't bargained for. Of course it is different when the thing happens to oneself, not to others, and in reality, not imagination."

-C.S. Lewis

"God is always doing 10,000 things in your life, and you may be aware of three of them."

- John Piper

1. Catch Up On Life:

This is when we update each other on the day in and day out happenings of our lives. As church family, we care about each other's lives: what we're celebrating, what we're mourning, what decisions we're praying through, and everything in between. (1 Thessalonians 2:8, Romans 12:10 and 15)

- **Celebrate the wins** - where have you seen Jesus working in the last week (shaping you to be more like Himself or working in the lives of those that He's put around you)?
- What (if any) big life updates do you need to catch us up on (positive or negative)?

Pray: Take every opportunity to pray and thank God for the good He's doing in our lives, and ask for help and healing anywhere there is pain.

2. Review the Mission:

Just like God the Father sent Jesus on a mission of reconciliation for us, Jesus sends us out as ambassadors of His reconciliation. We are called to make disciples wherever we go. (John 20:21 and 2 Corinthians 5:18-20)

People:

- **Reactive** - Who in your life (family, coworkers, etc.) can we join you in praying for? Who has God put around you that is showing spiritual interest? Who is hurting and could use some love from our group?
- **Proactive** - Who are the people we are intentionally living on mission with (neighbors, STC partner organizations, or a specific demographic in Columbia)? What are our upcoming plans to love, serve and build relationships with this group?

Plan:

- Are there any rhythms already planned, or an extra rhythm we could plan to create a way for these friends to connect with our group?

Pray: Prayer is the fuel of God's mission. Let's pray for our people by name; pray for their needs, and opportunities to have spiritual conversations that help them take next steps toward Jesus.

3. Sermon Discussion:

God uses His Word to reveal Himself to us, to equip us to live the good life He's designed for us, to show us our sin, and to strengthen us as we follow Him. We preach the Word on Sundays and apply it as a LifeGroup throughout the week. (2 Timothy 3:16-17, Colossians 1:9-12 and James 1:22-25)

Primary Passages: John 11:1-27 and 38-44

Read and Recap: Have someone read **John 11:1-27 and 38-44** and recap the highlights from this week's sermon.

Part of the reason that suffering happens is because God loves his people and is always working to bring about His own glory so that our faith might be strengthened.

- Have there been times in your life where you thought or felt like you had absolutely no clue what God was up to?

Reread John 11:20-26. Mary and Martha experience what is likely one of the greatest instances of suffering in their lives, and Jesus says that it was better for this to happen to them because He is doing something in it.

- How would you react to hearing Jesus say that to you in your suffering?
- Have you seen God accomplish something through your (or someone else's) suffering?
- How would you live differently when you know the end of the story - that Jesus is the resurrection and the life?



Who are the people in your life that need the hope of the resurrection that Jesus offers? What practical steps can your LifeGroup take to rally around them?

4. Engage the Heart:

Jesus calls us to walk in the light, confessing our sins to God and each other. God's Spirit works through confession and community to lead us to repentance. (Romans 3:23-24, James 5:16 and 1 John 1:5-10)

- What are some unhealthy ways you've tried to cope in response to suffering?
- What are sins that you need to confess this week (Rest of LG speak into their lives: How does the gospel address and free him/her up?)
- How can your LifeGroup be praying for you this week?

Pray: James tells us that a community that regularly confesses sin and prays for each other will see a lot of healing. Confess your sins in prayer and pray for each other.