

LIFE GROUP LESSON

Now more than Ever - Week of September 7

S – Small Groups are the best place for life change.

I remember several years ago when our family was in a tough place, being resistant to my husband's Life Group. You would think as the pastor's wife (and writing the sermon-based Life Group lessons, no less) I would be all about the 'loving support of others' ... especially during a difficult season. But I was numb. And I did not want to be around people. I could not bring myself to sit in a circle and face anything or anyone. It was a dark time, and I felt pressed and crushed beyond recognition.

For much of my life I had battled depression and lived *for me*. So when my husband and I met, it was like a new start. We married after a short engagement and wasted no time in having four children in five years. I wanted to serve alongside my husband in ministry and support his call. As soon as we came to Christ Church, he launched Life Groups that met in homes... including *our* home. All seemed doable at first. But soon the demands of a growing church and life itself began to take a toll on our family. Three of our four children began to battle bouts of depression triggered by trouble at school. And in February of 2009, we found out one of our teenage daughters was pregnant. At this point, I felt like running away, not hosting a Life Group in our home.

But my husband was adamant about continuing the Life Group that met weekly in our home ... even in our mess. I recall on one particular evening being in our bedroom upstairs and hearing the voices of Life Group participants pouring out prayers and petitions for our family in the family room downstairs. As I listened, I began to visualize their faces and their selflessness, and my heart began to soften. What I was overhearing was the holy presence of Elohim in our family room below. Suddenly, it occurred to me, whatever sanity was holding our family together was the prayers and petitions of these precious saints in my family room, downstairs in our home ... God was in the house.

The prayers of Charles' Life Group were heard and answered! The Life

Group engaging in such means of grace as loving, worshiping, conversing, praying, searching the Scriptures, interceding – brought hope to my heart. The expression 'Isolation kills' is true; and yet, God has the power to meet us even in the darkest places of despair ... and most often, he does it through his people, other brothers and sisters in Christ. Miracles happen when Christ-followers preach *Jesus Christ is Lord* with their words and actions, and resolve to serve one another and stand in the gap – no matter what – through their prayers and presence.

Read 2 Corinthians 4:5-18

Discussion:

- What stands out to you in these verses?
- If this is your first time in a Life Group (small groups, share group) what do you hope to gain from availing yourself to this group?
- If you have been part of a Life Group, share briefly how being a part of a Life Group has been like 'family'.

Life Group is a trusted space, a community of fellow believers encouraging one another with an over-arching aim of honestly living out our faith in Christ. Notice verse eighteen—

“So we don’t look at troubles we can see now; rather, we fix our gaze on things that cannot be seen. For the things we see now will soon be gone, but the things we cannot see will last forever” (2 Corinthians 4:18).

How does availing ourselves to community (i.e. Life Group) :

- Keep us from falling away during times of crushing and pressing?
- Prepare us for citizenship in heaven?
- Equip us to live (and yes, *preach* with our very lives) that Jesus is Lord?

Sometimes there seems to be no rhyme or reason why we must suffer. But the psalmist declares: “The LORD is close to the brokenhearted; he rescues those whose spirits are crushed” (Psalm 34:18). Of all people, the Lord Jesus knows. He endured the ultimate suffering – taking the sins of all humanity – upon the cross. Before his crucifixion, Jesus had told his disciples: “I have a terrible baptism of suffering ahead of me, and I am under a heavy burden until it is accomplished” (Luke 12:50). Once it was accomplished, however, when our dying Savior cried out from the cross: “IT IS FINISHED!” – what he spoke, he fulfilled. Sin ... finished. A way out of death, hell, and the grave. Salvation *for all who will receive and participate* is paid in full.

“But as for me, God will redeem my life. He will snatch me from the power of the grave” (Psalm 49:15).

Close by reading **2 Corinthians 1:3-11**

- Hear the words of the apostle Paul as though he is speaking to you.
- Close in a time of prayer.
- Give the Lord Jesus thanks and worship for honoring you by giving his life for you ... for each of you in Life Group ... for the world... and yes, even for your enemies.

One Year Bible Reading For This Week:

September 7: Song of Solomon 5:1-8:14, 2 Cor. 9:1-15, Ps. 51:1-19, Prov. 22:24-25
 September 8: Isaiah 1:1-2:22, 2 Corinthians 10:1-18, Psalm 52:1-9, Proverbs 22:26-27
 September 9: Isaiah 3:1-5:30, 2 Corinthians 11:1-15, Psalm 53:1-6, Proverbs 22:28-29
 September 10: Isaiah 6:1-7:25, 2 Corinthians 11:16-33, Psalm 54:1-7, Proverbs 23:1-3
 September 11: Isaiah 8:1-9:21, 2 Corinthians 12:1-10, Psalm 55:1-23, Proverbs 23:4-5
 September 12: Isaiah 10:1-11:16, 2 Corinthians 12:11-21, Psalm 56:1-13, Proverbs 23:6-8
 September 13: Isaiah 12:1-14:32, 2 Corinthians 13:1-14, Psalm 57:1-11, Proverbs 23:9-11

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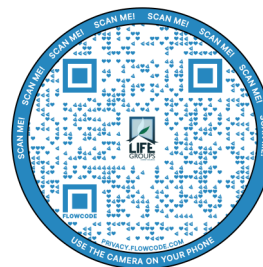
Text: 2 Corinthians 4: 5-13

S: _____ are the best place for
 _____.

PLAIN TRUTH

_____ are the best
 place for _____.

1. _____ yourself in _____
 to _____ your faith.
2. Our _____ God _____ us,
 so we can _____ others.
3. Life Groups _____ environments of
 _____ and _____ which leads
 to _____.



**Scan the QR Code to
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September 7, 2025