

THE CHURCH

A Spiritual Family on Mission

The Church: A Spiritual Family on Mission

Icebreaker: Who's had the biggest impact on your life and why?

Worship:

Good Plans | *Red Rocks Worship*

Open the Eyes of My Heart | *Shane & Shane*

When We Pray | *Citizens*

Read: 1 Thessalonians 4:9-10

"Now concerning brotherly love you have no need for anyone to write to you, for you yourselves have been taught by God to love one another, for that indeed is what you are doing to all the brothers through Macedonia. But we urge you, brothers, to do this more and more."

Discussion:

On Sunday, we were challenged by Carl not to TRY harder to love one another, but to TRAIN ourselves in love (like runners train for a marathon).

1. We started a new series about the church as a spiritual family because when a spiritual family is working right, there's nothing like it. How have you experienced the church as family throughout your life? What impact has that had on you?
2. How have you been taught by God to love others? In other words, how has God's love for you trained you to love others in the same way?
3. Think about one person you need practice in loving. What practices do you need to insert into your schedule in order to train yourself in love?
4. We heard an example at church of a Lifegroup learning about each other's kids and fighting for their identity and purpose. How could we, as a Lifegroup, practice loving one another?

Prayer:

Pair up with someone else in your group and share briefly your answers to the questions above and pray over one another. We want to speak the truth about where we are in loving others, while also bringing others in to pray and believe with us.

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Jesus is the Head of the Church

Icebreaker: What qualities do you look for in a friend?

Worship:

I could Sing of Your Love Forever | *Shane & Shane*

Firm Foundation | *Maverick City Music*

King of Kings | *Hillsong Worship & Brooke Ligertwood*

Read:	Discuss:
Ephesians 1:22-23 & Colossians 1:15-18	<p>Q: Based on the scriptures, why is it important to have Christ as the head of the church?</p> <p>Q: What are ways in our life we can keep Christ as the head?</p>
<p>On Sunday, Carl unpacked how the spiritual family should operate with Jesus as the head. Read this statement out loud as you continue your discussion: "As the head of this spiritual family, Jesus connects me to fellow "adoptees" I would not normally connect with."</p> <p>Read Acts 9:26-30 & Acts 11:19-26</p>	<p>Q: Barnabas could see Saul's potential (who would later become Paul) when no one else could. Who is someone in your life who truly saw you, believed in you and what was that like?</p> <p>Q: Is there someone you could be a Barnabas to in the family of God? Maybe someone who feels they have not been fully invited into the church community?</p>
<p>On Sunday we talked about being "Illuminators" vs "Diminishers." Illuminators are present to people and want to understand others while "Diminishers" make people feel small and unseen. Read this quote from Bessel Vander Kolk: "Knowing that we are seen and heard by the important people in our lives can make us feel calm and safe and being ignored or dismissed can precipitate rage reactions or mental collapse."</p>	<p>Q: What are ways we as a Lifegroup can pursue being a community of Illuminators?</p>

Prayer:

Pair up with someone else in your group and share your takeaway from Lifegroup. What stood out? What did you like? What did you not understand, but want to learn more? Pray for each other, allowing space for people to share any unconfessed sin.

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The Church is the Body of Christ

Icebreaker: In groups of 3-4, discover who had the most/strangest childhood injuries or broken bones! If you have time, tell that story to the whole group.

Worship:

If We Are The Body | *Casting Crowns*

Fresh Wind | *Hillsong Worship*

Jesus at the Center | *Israel and New Breed*

Read: 1 Corinthians 12:12-27, Romans 12:3-8, Ephesians 4:15-16.

Discussion:

1. In the passage from 1 Corinthians, why does Paul go to such lengths to describe the physical body?
2. Compare and contrast the 1 Corinthians passage with the passage from Romans 12. What do you believe the Holy Spirit (through Paul) is emphasizing? Why?
3. According to Ephesians 4:15-16, what is the result of the body working together? How can we relate that message to those “Lone Ranger” believers we may know? How can we encourage friends who are not part of a church or Lifegroup?
4. If there is time, recap the stories of broken bones, etc. from the ice breaker. How did those injuries or illnesses keep the body from functioning as it should?

Prayer:

In groups of 2-3, pray for each other’s “part” of the body of Christ. Encourage each other to fulfill their calling in that area. Are there other areas where God may be calling you and gifting you to serve?

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A Spiritual Family on Mission

The Church is a House of Prayer

Icebreaker: Even though Christmas was two months ago, in groups of 3 or 4, tell each other about your all-time favorite Christmas/birthday present! Did you ask for it, or was it a complete surprise?

Worship:

Same God | *Elevation Worship*

Hymn of Heaven | *Phil Wickham*

Wait on You | *Elevation Worship*

Read: Isaiah 56:6-7, Matthew 21:12-13, Mark 11:15-17, Luke 19:45-46

Discussion:

5. Gleaning from the passage in Isaiah, discuss how “foreigners” are included, what the Lord is looking for, and what that means for us as believers today.
6. The synoptic Gospels all include an account of Jesus cleansing the Temple. Ask your group to dive into Jesus’ reason for doing this. How do these passages apply to us?
7. What are some steps you can take to ensure your own life (as a temple of the Holy Spirit) is kept in order as a house of prayer?

Prayer:

Either remaining in your large group or dividing into smaller groups, pray for our church, your Lifegroup, and each other in the ongoing need for us all to be “A House of Prayer.”

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The Church is the Distribution of God

Icebreaker: Share with the group your favorite Sunday morning service in the past year, and why it was impactful for you.

Worship:

Who Else - Live | Gateway Worship

Holy Forever | Chris Tomlin

Nothing But The Blood | Jesus Culture

Read: Isaiah 61:1-3

Discussion: We want to discuss how God uses the church (and this Lifegroup), to distribute His freedom to the world around us.

1. To start, let's take a moment to share where we've seen God accomplish Isaiah 61:1-3 in our personal lives. Let's have 3-4 people share where they've seen Jesus bring breakthrough like Isaiah describes in their lives.
2. Isaiah 61:1-3 mentions the poor, the brokenhearted, the captives, the bound, the mourning, and those with a faith spirit. Where do you see these in our city or your spheres of influence?
3. The first three verses provide the type of breakthrough for those aforementioned problems: good news, binding up, liberty, opening of prison doors, comfort, and new garments. What would it look like for our church to provide these to those who need it in our city and spheres of influence?
4. Are these any areas you see where our Lifegroup could step in and fulfill God's desire for freedom as shown in this passage? How could we enter into God's healing work in our city or spheres of influence where we, as members, have access?

Prayer:

Let's end by breaking up into groups of 2-3 and pray for a fresh filling of the Holy Spirit so that we can walk out this Isaiah 61:1-3 calling. Pray also for those areas of the city and spheres of influence that need the healing and restoration of God. Pray about where your Lifegroup can step into partnership with God in those areas.

Resources: For a deeper dive, check out the Hebrew words behind this passage with this link: [Blue Letter Bible](#).

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The Church is the House of God

Icebreaker: If you could change careers, what would you change to and why?

Worship:

Here I am to Worship + Spontaneous | *MBL Worship*

Allegiance (Live) | *Antioch Music*

Never Met Anyone Like You | *Antioch Music*

Read: 1 Peter 2:1-10

Discussion: *As a people, we are like these stones being built together for a dwelling place for God.*

1. Verses 1-3 speak strongly about how the church should walk in integrity, as well as “grow up into our salvation.” What does abstaining from the things Peter mentions have to do with growing up into salvation?
2. What does it mean to “taste” that the Lord is good, and what does it mean to “see” that the Lord is good?
3. Peter says we are being built up into a spiritual house, a temple of God. How does what God does individually in our lives play into how we experience Him corporately?
4. What does it mean for us to accept the identity of being priests, and how would this effect how we encounter God when all together?

Prayer:

Let's end by breaking up into groups of 2-3. Ask each person to consider and share about what in their lives is hindering them from growing up into their salvation from verses 1-3. Encourage one another to share vulnerably and pray for one another. Make a practical game plan for walking away from the hinderances this week. Once all are finished, huddle all together and pray as a Lifegroup that you may be built up like a spiritual house for God.

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The Church is the Ark that Makes it Through the Storm

Icebreaker: You are a Special Missions NASA Astronaut and you're embarking on a ten-year voyage to another earth-like planet to save humanity. You're allowed only 3 personal items. What will you take and why?

Worship:

Praise | *Elevation Worship*

I Speak Jesus | *Charity Gayle*

His name is Jesus | *Jeremy Riddle*

Read: Genesis 6:18-22; Mark 4:35-41

Discussion: *Noah's Ark, concerning the universal flood, is a central part of the biblical story. In this event, God asked Noah to build an ark because He was going to send great rains to flood the earth due to the sins of the people. The Bible tells us that Noah was a righteous man and that he found favor in the eyes of the Lord. Noah and his family were saved from the storm and flood by staying in the ark that God had asked him to build.*

1. How do we see God's grace and mercy for humanity reflected in this story?
2. In 2021, God gave us the first of five prophetic words for the church; that word was "Conscripted." God was "recruiting" us as a church to be a part of a battleship on a mission for God and His purposes. How is this prophetic word similar to that of Noah's ark? What can we learn from his story that we can apply to our story now?
3. Noah and his family were saved because he was a righteous man and they found favor in the eyes of the Lord. God is calling us, "conscripting" us to jump in; NOT to be a cruise liner, but a battleship. What or who makes us a righteous people to be called by God to be part of this ark? (Read Mark 4:35-41).
4. How do we make this a story, NOT about us, but a story about God's people responding and sharing Jesus' love, grace, and mercy with others?
5. In what practical ways can our Lifegroup be a part of the Ark's (church's) crew? How do we stay in the Ark?

Prayer:

Let's break into groups of 2-3 and share personal prayer requests. Are there any storms in your life that need Jesus? Have you been hesitating to fully jump in the "ark" and be part of what God is doing? Pray for breakthrough for one another and for your Lifegroup to step into partnership with God in those areas.