



From
Darkness
to
Light

LIFE GROUP LEADER PACKET

FEBRUARY 28- APRIL 4, 2021

From Darkness to Light

28-Feb	Believe in Light	John 12:20-50
7-Mar	Serving up Light	John 13:1-20
14-Mar	Learning from Light	John 14:15-31
21-Mar	Remaining in Light	John 15:18-27
28-Mar	United in Light	John 17:13-26
4-Apr	When Light Laughed	John 20:1-18

Sundial or Stopwatch? Which one do you prefer? Slow or Fast?
Both tell time and both can describe different seasons of your life.

I can tell you the exact time of my first child's birth...4:56 PM. I can remember the room, my emotions, and details of the moment. Like a stopwatch, I can recount how each second counted in my life.

However, take 2020...hmmm. Sure there were moments, but in some ways they have coalesced time into a sundial making a shadow of the hours, days and months. Looking back I feel the 'hour' in grand scale like a bitter cold winter seeing only the accumulation of the snowfall and not the individual snowflakes or storms.

Each season and second is a gift from God no matter how you keep it. As Jesus moved from darkness to light, the 'hour' began to turn into seconds. For us looking back, it is one grand epic of redemption, but each step to the cross was profoundly inspirational. Every breath mattered and every word imperative. It was truly a matter of life and death and for us, a matter of death to life.

The apostle John feels the time. "And Jesus answered them, 'The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified.'" (12:23) "Now is my soul troubled. And what shall I say? 'Father, save Me from this hour'? But for this purpose I have come to this hour. (12:27) Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour had come to depart out of this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. (13:1) But I have said these things to you, that when their hour comes you may remember that I told them to you. "I did not say these things to you from the beginning, because I was with you. (16:4) When Jesus had spoken these words, He lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son that the Son may glorify You,... (17:1) Now it was the day of Preparation of the Passover. It was about the sixth hour. He said to the Jews, "Behold your King!" (19:14) Then He said to the disciple, "Behold, your mother!" And from that hour the disciple took her to his own home. (19:27) Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb. (20:1) I have come into the world as light, so that whoever believes in Me may not remain in darkness.(12:46)

As you embrace this time in your life and this preaching series know that you are on the move. You are not in neutral. You are becoming, growing, morphing! A new day is dawning. Breakthrough is around the bend. The Darkness is broken and we are unbreakable. Jesus' love is undeniable and our hope is incomparable! Let's continue moving from darkness to light...resurrected LIGHT!

For further encouragement listen to this new song...(Almost Midnight) Help is on the Way by Toby Mac
God is rolling up His sleeves again!

"It may be midnight or mid day, - never early, never late - He's gon' stand by what he claims, - I've lived enough left to say... help is on the way".

**At Living Hope, we believe that we must be
connected relationally to grow spiritually.**

PURPOSE OF LIFE GROUPS

We exist to reach the world for Jesus, one person at a time. We feel that is best done in small, relational environments where biblical disciples can be made. Life Groups are the primary vehicle by which we carry out the vision and mission of Living Hope Community Church. We will be a church that makes disciples, who make disciples of Jesus.

Vision: The vision of our Life Groups is to provide a spiritual community where groups of people are transformed into the image of Christ, growing in their understanding of God's story, and living it out in the context of loving accountability and expected reproduction.

We believe that a definition of a disciple is found in Matthew 4:19: *And Jesus said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men."* Here is how we define disciple: (1) A disciple knows and follows Christ; (2) a disciple is being changed by Christ; and (3) a disciple is committed to the mission of Christ.

I Thessalonians 2

So, being affectionately desirous of you, we were ready to share with you not only the gospel of God but also our own selves, because you had become very dear to us.

Galatians 5:22-23

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

Matthew 22:37-40

Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind'. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments".

John 15:4-5

Remain in Me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in Me. "I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in Me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from Me you can do nothing."

We believe that we cannot grow spiritually if we are not connected relationally

Matthew 28:18-20

Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age".

Acts 2:42-47

And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. And all who believed were together and had all things in common. And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.

SAFE GROUP: We will strive to create an environment where everyone can be real, open, and honest with their struggles and victories.

CONFIDENTIALITY: What is said in the group stays in the group.

LISTEN: Let's value one another during the discussions by really listening to what is being shared. Try to avoid thinking about how you are going to respond, or what you are going to say next.

PAUSE: Allow a pause in conversation after someone shares. Give the person sharing the chance to finish and the group the opportunity to consider what was just shared before responding.

SILENCE: It is important to allow silence in the group as it provides an opportunity for someone to share and for members in the group to process the topic or questions being considered.

NO "CROSS TALK": Be considerate of others as they are sharing. No side conversations.

NO FIXING: We are not here to fix each other. Jesus does that part. Give encouragement; speak truth; and point to Jesus. Don't try to solve or fix each other.

NO RESCUING: When people are sharing something deeply personal, there can be a tendency to try to make them feel better about themselves or the situation by providing immediate condolences. This will often cause them to stop sharing. Resist the temptation to rescue people.

SHARING: Be sensitive about the amount of time you share.

BE SELF-AWARE: Be self-aware of how you are personally affecting the environment through your words, actions, and non-verbal communication.

USE "I" STATEMENTS: It's easy to talk about the issues of others, but for our purposes, we want you to put yourself on the table. Try to use "I" statements rather than "them", "the church", "us", "we", etc.

CONFLICT: We will commit to resolve conflict biblically. When conflict or sin issues between group members arise, we want to make sure that we are honoring God and each other in the way we deal with these issues. The following are a few key Scriptures in this regard (there are many others):

If someone sins against you – Matthew 18:15-20
Restoring someone in sin – Galatians 6:1-5
Forgive a sinner – Colossians 3:12-13
Reconciling differences – Matthew 5:23-26, Matthew 7:1-5

MODEL A LIFE GROUP

Step 1: Welcome:

- Members, visitors, and new believers feel valued and welcomed...
- Starts the moment someone arrives and ends when everyone is gone.

Step 2: Opening Prayer:

- Invites God's Holy Spirit into our presence to prepare our hearts for what God has for us.

Step 3: Purpose/Vision Casting:

- Encourages relationships with God and relationships with others.
- Expresses the purpose of meeting together as a life group and challenges one another to grow and multiply (Branching).

Step 4: Group Guidelines: (see page 5)

Step 5: Follow Up:

- How did last week's discussion impact your week? or
- What did you take away from the sermon? or
- What are you thankful for?

Step 6: Setting the scene:

- Discuss the background to today's passage and the target for today's discussion.

Step 7: Tell the story:

- Read or Tell the passage. Rebuild the story: have the group recreate the passage together.
- Ask if anything was left out?

Step 8: Debrief the story:

- Ask Head (what the Word says), Heart (wrestle with what we believe), and then Hands Questions (bring truth and belief into our everyday realities).
- Remember the 'discussion idea' to help you focus the direction of the discussion.

Step 9: Close in prayer:

- Share personal prayer requests and give everyone an opportunity to pray.

4 KEY COMPONENTS TO MAKING DISCIPLES



BIBLICAL FOUNDATION FOR RELATIONSHIP

The Bible alone gives a clear and complete picture of what God wants done—His mission—and how He wants it done—His methods. The purpose of the Church is to make disciples of Jesus who can make disciples of Jesus. We do this with the understanding that relationship is the key vehicle.



INTENTIONAL LEADER

An intentional leader understands that part of their role is to reach the lost, make disciples of Jesus, and create Christ-centered environments where disciple-making can happen. They understand where a person is spiritually and what is needed to help them grow.



RELATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

This is a group facilitated by a leader who is intentionally modeling spiritual fruit. They are doing life together with a kingdom mindset. The relationships go beyond just the group time. These relationships press into areas of privacy, transparency, and vulnerability.



REPRODUCIBLE DISCIPLE-MAKING PROCESS

This is the process for developing people toward Christ-likeness.

This includes three parts:

“My Part” the discipler; “Their Part” the disciple, and “God’s Part”.

Leaders understand the Stages of Spiritual Growth and can identify where a person is spiritually and help them mature and grow at each stage.

TIPS FOR ASKING QUESTIONS

GENERAL QUESTIONS: The following questions are examples that will help you have a base to begin with and will give you ideas for developing your own questions. Be intentional to ask all three types of questions (head, heart, hands) as you lead your discussion.

HEAD

These questions help us to examine what the Word shows.

- What do you see God doing, saying, or showing about Himself?
- Who are the people and what is going on with them?
- What stands out to you in this passage?
- What do you think the main point is?
- What does this show us about _____?

You can fill in the blank with - God/man/_____?

(Or the topic of discussion such as worship)

OBSERVATION

HEART

These questions help us wrestle with what we believe.

- What do you see about yourself?
- Have you known anyone who is an example of this?
- What has it looked like when you have or have not known/believed/lived this in your life?
- What questions does this raise for you?

INTERPRETATION

HANDS

These questions help us bring truth and beliefs into everyday realities.

- What is one way you can apply this to your life this week?
- What are you challenged to think/believe/do differently because of this passage and our discussion?
- How can you use this to disciple others?
- How does this impact you? Your relationship with _____?
(Fill in with: family, fellow believers, work-place or community.)

APPLICATION

FOLLOW UP QUESTIONS:

Asking a question after hearing someone's response helps people process and gives everyone better understanding. Follow up questions come from a heart of being interested, curious, and seeking to understand and draw out. They are not intended to grill or corner people.

- What has brought you to that understanding?
- What would be an example?
- Explain a little more.
- What might be another way to look at it?
- How does _____ affect _____?
- What does it mean?

BEFORE GROUP STARTS — YOUR ROLE:

Read through the curriculum and discussion passages. Be aware of what God is showing you personally. Pray for your group members. What do you see God doing in each of them? What is God's part and what is your part as you walk with them? Psalm 119:18, "Open my eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of your law."

WELCOME: (Share a meal, snack, ice-breaker, game or story)

OPEN IN PRAYER

VISION CAST:

Help everyone grow in their relationship with God and others. Remind everyone that spiritual maturity is growing into the image of Jesus and bearing the fruit of the Spirit. Encourage everyone to grow in community, to reach out to one another and others through service and the daily rhythms of life. Galatians 5:22-23, "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law."

LIFE GROUP GUIDELINES:

You don't need to read this every week but initially, when someone new comes, and when the series or topic changes is a good time to reorient yourselves to the guidelines. This helps set the tone for the group and helps everyone have clear expectations for each other.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

See the weekly email, bulletin, or website and choose the top 2-3 connections that would benefit your group. Also, use this time to give any connections that are specific to your Life Group.

FOLLOW UP & WARM UP:

- *How have you enjoyed the winter and all the snowfall this year?*
- *Share your favorite picture from the winter season. Why do you like it?*
- *Can you remember the greatest darkness that you physically experienced? Describe the scene and environment. What were you feeling?*

SERIES THEME: From Darkness to Light

WEEK 1: *Believe in Light*

TEXT: John 12:20-50

20 Now among those who went up to worship at the feast were some Greeks. **21** So these came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and asked him, “**Sir, we wish to see Jesus.**” **22** Philip went and told Andrew; Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus. **23** And Jesus answered them, “The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. **24** Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. **25** Whoever loves his life loses it, and whoever hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. **26** If anyone serves me, he must follow me; and where I am, there will my servant be also. If anyone serves me, the Father will honor him. **27** “Now is my soul troubled. And what shall I say? ‘Father, save me from this hour’? But for this purpose I have come to this hour. **28** Father, glorify your name.” Then a voice came from heaven: “I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again.” **29** The crowd that stood there and heard it said that it had thundered. Others said, “An angel has spoken to him.” **30** Jesus answered, “This voice has come for your sake, not mine. **31** Now is the judgment of this world; now will the ruler of this world be cast out. **32** And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.” **33** He said this to show by what kind of death he was going to die. **34** So the crowd answered him, “We have heard from the Law that the Christ remains forever. How can you say that the Son of Man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of Man?” **35** So Jesus said to them, “**The light is among you for a little while longer. Walk while you have the light, lest darkness overtake you. The one who walks in the darkness does not know where he is going. 36 While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light.**” When Jesus had said these things, he departed and hid himself from them. **37** Though he had done so many signs before them, they still did not believe in him, **38** so that the word spoken by the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled: “Lord, who has believed what he heard from us, and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?” **39** Therefore they could not believe. For again Isaiah said, **40** “He has blinded their eyes and hardened their heart, lest they see with their eyes, and understand with their heart, and turn, and I would heal them.” **41** Isaiah said these things because he saw his glory and spoke of him. **42** Nevertheless, many even of the authorities believed in him, but for fear of the Pharisees they did not confess it, so that they would not be put out of the synagogue; **43** for they loved the glory that comes from man more than the glory that comes from God. **44** And Jesus cried out and said, “Whoever believes in me, believes not in me but in him who sent me. **45** And whoever sees me sees him who sent me. **46 I have come into the world as light, so that whoever believes in me may not remain in darkness. 47** If anyone hears my words and does not keep them, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world but to save the world. **48** The one who rejects me and does not receive my words has a judge; the word that I have spoken will judge him on the last day. **49** For I have not spoken on my own authority, but the Father who sent me has himself given me a commandment—what to say and what to speak. **50** And I know that his commandment is eternal life. What I say, therefore, I say as the Father has told me.”

TELL THE STORY: Read John 12:20-50

DEBRIEF THE STORY:

Spend time explaining the passage again in your own words. (The meaning of the author's terms, structure, literary form, and atmosphere.)

These questions help us to examine what the Word shows.

- What does this passage teach us about God? What does it teach us about humanity?
- What passage of Isaiah is quoted here and why? (Isaiah 6, 53)
- What prohibited the Jewish leaders from totally embracing Jesus?
- What do we learn about the 'light' from this passage? Where do we see darkness?
- What is the difference between Jesus judging someone now versus the last day?
- Why would Jesus refer to Himself as the Son of Man? What does being 'lifted up' refer to?
- What role does belief have in obedience? Who gives understanding?
- Why do we hear the voice of God in this portion of the text? Why is it significant?
- Is Jesus aware of this 'hour' in His life and just how close the redemption of man is?
- What do we learn about the disciples from this passage?
- What does this passage teach us about glory? Is there a connection between glory and service in this passage?
- How is Jesus' first coming different than His second coming in purpose and mission?
- How will the ruler of this world be cast out?

These questions help us wrestle with what we believe.

- Have you ever pointed someone to Jesus? Share that experience.
- When people encounter you, do they see Jesus? Explain.
- How has Jesus 'revealed' Himself to you in undeniable ways?
- What prohibits you from totally embracing Jesus' publicly? When is peer pressure most overwhelming to you?
- What are some reasons that people you know do not believe? Some even deny the very voice of God. Is it lack of reason that some don't believe or something else?
- How do you remain in the light? What habits and disciplines propel you in intimacy with God?
- Why do you think Jesus hid Himself from them? (vs. 36) Can His hiddenness be mercy?
- When has your soul been troubled? Is God near to the brokenhearted? What did you learn during those times?

These questions help us bring truth and beliefs into everyday realities.

- How can you specifically pray for those do not believe? (II Tim. 2:24-26, etc...)
- Take a moment and watch this clip from the TV series Chosen... <https://www.facebook.com/InsideTheChosen/videos/the-chosen-episode-7-scene-its-an-act-of-faith-not-reason/214356493128791/> What does this teach us about belief and Jesus being lifted up?
- How can you hate your life in this world? Where do you need to 'die' so that you can bear eternal fruit? How can the 'honor' of God give you hope?
- How would you use this passage to disciple someone?
- Focus on one takeaway from this passage. What is God impressing upon you to say/believe/do differently in your life?

Close in Prayer

Bring to God the ideas and topics that you raised in the above questions. Listen to the Spirit as you pray.

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Psalm 119:18, "Open my eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of your law."

WELCOME: (Share a meal, snack, ice-breaker, game or story)

OPEN IN PRAYER

VISION CAST:

Help everyone grow in their relationship with God and others. Remind everyone that spiritual maturity is growing into the image of Jesus and bearing the fruit of the Spirit. Encourage everyone to grow in community, to reach out to one another and others through service and the daily rhythms of life. Galatians 5:22-23, "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law."

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ANNOUNCEMENTS:

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FOLLOW UP & WARM UP:

- *What are you thankful for today? How did last time's discussion impact your week? Where did you step out in obedience this past week? What did you take away from the sermon?*
- *Who do you know that has a servant heart? What characteristics about this person stand out to you?*
- *Share a time when you have served someone anonymously. What was your motivation?*

SERIES THEME: From Darkness to Light**WEEK 2: *Serving up Light*****TEXT: John 13:1-20**

13 Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart out of this world to the Father, having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. **2** During supper, when the devil had already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him, **3** Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going back to God, **4** rose from supper. He laid aside his outer garments, and taking a towel, tied it around his waist. **5** Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was wrapped around him. **6** He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, do you wash my feet?" **7** Jesus answered him, "What I am doing you do not understand now, but afterward you will understand." **8** Peter said to him, "You shall never wash my feet." Jesus answered him, "If I do not wash you, you have no share with me." **9** Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!" **10** Jesus said to him, "The one who has bathed does not need to wash, except for his feet, but is completely clean. And you are clean, but not every one of you." **11** For he knew who was to betray him; that was why he said, "Not all of you are clean." **12** When he had washed their feet and put on his outer garments and resumed his place, he said to them, "Do you understand what I have done to you? **13** You call me Teacher and Lord, and you are right, for so I am. **14** If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. **15** For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you. **16** Truly, truly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. **17** If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them. **18** I am not speaking of all of you; I know whom I have chosen. But the Scripture will be fulfilled, 'He who ate my bread has lifted his heel against me.' **19** I am telling you this now, before it takes place, that when it does take place you may believe that I am he. **20** Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever receives the one I send receives me, and whoever receives me receives the one who sent me."

TELL THE STORY: Read John 13:1-20

DEBRIEF THE STORY:

Spend time explaining the passage again in your own words. (The meaning of the author's terms, structure, literary form, and atmosphere.)

HEAD

These questions help us to examine what the Word shows.

- What does this passage teach us about our Lord and Teacher? What does it teach us about humanity?
- What do verses 1-3 teach us about Jesus' understanding of this time in His life and mission?
- What is Simon Peter struggling with? What will take time for him to understand?
- What does Jesus exactly do for His disciples? What is the lesson(s)? How long did it take?
- Why do only the feet need cleaning and not the whole body for eleven of them?
- Who is the one that is not 'clean'? Does Jesus wash that person's feet? Why do you feel like the author John includes Him in this narrative throughout these verses?
- The disciples understand Jesus as Teacher and Lord, but what other 'name' or aspect is He teaching them about Himself?
- What action during the supper does Jesus predict that will fulfill Scripture? What understanding does Jesus hope the disciples receive?
- What posture does Jesus take in this passage? What have the disciples been arguing about recently?

OBSERVATION

HEART

These questions help us wrestle with what we believe.

- What would your reaction have been if Jesus, your LORD, asked to wash your feet?
- What would the experience be like? Would He talk, look at you, make sure each toe was completely clean and dry?
- Have you ever rejected the kindness or goodness of God? Explain. What makes this difficult for us to accept? What struggles do you have with transparency and being authentic?
- Would you have chosen and treated Judas the same as Jesus did? Explain.
- Does it ever feel like the devil is winning or stronger than Light? Explain. How is Jesus victorious? How can He be victorious in you?
- When do you specifically refer to the 'master' and not the 'servant'? How can you allow the love of Christ to reign in this area?
- What benefits come from 'knowing' the Father is in control and has full authority?

INTERPRETATION

HANDS

These questions help us bring truth and beliefs into everyday realities.

- Focus on one takeaway from this passage. What is God impressing upon you to say/believe/do differently in your life?
- Did you know that some churches practice feet washing on a consistent basis? Have you ever seen this done? Would you ever consider doing this? Under what circumstances? How seriously should we consider the words of Jesus to 'do just as I have done to you'?
- How might Jesus be calling you and/or your group to serve one another? Would you prayerfully consider helping with Torch soccer, the Nativity, or volunteering on Sunday? Check out our 'Make an Impact' board before you enter the auditorium for opportunities.
- Who do you need to love 'to the end' and finish what you have started?

APPLICATION

Close in Prayer

Bring to God the ideas and topics that you raised in the above questions. Listen to the Spirit as you pray.

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This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

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FOLLOW UP & WARM UP:

- *What are you thankful for today? How did last time's discussion impact your week? Where did you step out in obedience this past week? What did you take away from the sermon?*
- *Do you have any siblings? Share how you relate to each one and why. What are some of your similarities and differences?*
- *What is your favorite Google feature? (ex. drive, earth, calendar, search, maps, gmail, etc...) Which one do you use the most and why?*

SERIES THEME: From Darkness to Light

WEEK 3: *Learning from Light*

TEXT: John 14:15-31

15 “If you love me, you will keep my commandments. **16** And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, **17** even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you. **18** “I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. **19** Yet a little while and the world will see me no more, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. **20** In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. **21** Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him.” **22** Judas (not Iscariot) said to him, “Lord, how is it that you will manifest yourself to us, and not to the world?” **23** Jesus answered him, “If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. **24** Whoever does not love me does not keep my words. And the word that you hear is not mine but the Father's who sent me. **25** “These things I have spoken to you while I am still with you. **26** But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you. **27** Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid. **28** You heard me say to you, ‘I am going away, and I will come to you.’ If you loved me, you would have rejoiced, because I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I. **29** And now I have told you before it takes place, so that when it does take place you may believe. **30** I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming. He has no claim on me, **31** but I do as the Father has commanded me, so that the world may know that I love the Father. Rise, let us go from here.

TELL THE STORY: Read John 14:15-31

DEBRIEF THE STORY:

Spend time explaining the passage again in your own words. (The meaning of the author's terms, structure, literary form, and atmosphere.)

These questions help us to examine what the Word shows.

- What does this passage teach you about the Holy Spirit? What does it teach you about humanities, need for the Holy Spirit?
- Circle all the names for the 3rd person of the Trinity in this passage. What are they? What does that teach us about Him and His role and responsibilities?
- How does this passage teach us how to love God? What does it look like?
- How does this passage teach us that God manifests Himself to us?
- Why should our hearts not be troubled or afraid?
- Who is the ruler of this world? What is his mission and strategy? Can he manipulate the Son?
- Why can't the world receive the Holy Spirit? What difference does He make?
- How is the Father greater than the Son?
- What are the commandments of God? (see I John 3:23)

These questions help us wrestle with what we believe.

- Why do you think the Holy Spirit is the 'forgotten God'?
- What are the most common misunderstandings concerning the 3rd person of the Trinity?
- What causes us to overcomplicate and over emphasize God's commands while under estimating and under utilizing dependence on the Holy Spirit?
- Would you rather serve God or obey God? Explain
- How would you explain the Holy Spirit to a new believer? Is His role and function before Jesus lived and died different than after? Read Jeremiah 31:33-34 and Ezekiel 36:26-28.
- How has the Holy Spirit helped you this month? Be specific. How has He increased your intimacy with Jesus?
- Describe the peace of God with each other. How is it different than the world's peace?
- What other passages in the Bible teach us about the Holy Spirit? Read them together.

These questions help us bring truth and beliefs into everyday realities.

- How will Jesus make His home with us in the future?
- How can you increase your knowledge of the Holy Spirit? (Consider reading *The Forgotten God* by Francis Chan or *The Wonderful Spirit-filled Life* by Charles Stanley)
- Have you ever taken a spiritual gift test? Call the office to hear about our evaluations for discerning your gifts, passions, and abilities. Especially if you are thinking about serving at LH!
- How can you be a helper, advocate or counselor to your brother or sister in Christ this month?
- Focus on one takeaway from this passage. What is God impressing upon you to say/believe/do differently in your life?
- Share a couple ways that you or your group can be a blessing this week and give the peace of God where there is fear and unrest.
- In your prayer time please include the orphans. Pray that our heavenly Father will extend His saving and sustaining grace to them for His glory and their good.

Close in Prayer

Bring to God the ideas and topics that you raised in the above questions. Listen to the Spirit as you pray.

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WEEK 4: MARCH 21, 2021

BEFORE GROUP STARTS — YOUR ROLE:

Read through the curriculum and discussion passages. Be aware of what God is showing you personally. Pray for your group members. What do you see God doing in each of them? What is God's part and what is your part as you walk with them? Psalm 119:18, "Open my eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of your law."

WELCOME: (Share a meal, snack, ice-breaker, game or story)

OPEN IN PRAYER

VISION CAST:

Help everyone grow in their relationship with God and others. Remind everyone that spiritual maturity is growing into the image of Jesus and bearing the fruit of the Spirit. Encourage everyone to grow in community, to reach out to one another and others through service and the daily rhythms of life. Galatians 5:22-23, "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law."

LIFE GROUP GUIDELINES:

You don't need to read this every week but initially, when someone new comes, and when the series or topic changes is a good time to reorient yourselves to the guidelines. This helps set the tone for the group and helps everyone have clear expectations for each other.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

See the weekly email, bulletin, or website and choose the top 2-3 connections that would benefit your group. Also use this time to give any connections that are specific to your Life Group.

FOLLOW UP & WARM UP:

- *What are you thankful for today? How did last time's discussion impact your week? Where did you step out in obedience this past week? What did you take away from the sermon?*
- *Do you remember a time of personal rebellion from either your parents, boss, teacher, or government? What were you thinking and hoping to accomplish? What lessons did you learn?*
- *Are you going to miss the winter, the snow, and colder temperatures? Explain.*

SERIES THEME: From Darkness to Light

WEEK 4: *Remaining in Light*

TEXT: John 15:18-27

18 “If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you. **19** If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. **20** Remember the word that I said to you: ‘A servant is not greater than his master.’ If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you. If they kept my word, they will also keep yours. **21** But all these things they will do to you on account of my name, because they do not know him who sent me. **22** If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have been guilty of sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin. **23** Whoever hates me hates my Father also. **24** If I had not done among them the works that no one else did, they would not be guilty of sin, but now they have seen and hated both me and my Father. **25** But the word that is written in their Law must be fulfilled: ‘They hated me without a cause.’ **26** “But when the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness about me. **27** And you also will bear witness, because you have been with me from the beginning.

TELL THE STORY: Read John 15:18-27

DEBRIEF THE STORY:

Spend time explaining the passage again in your own words. (The meaning of the author’s terms, structure, literary form, and atmosphere.)

HEAD

These questions help us to examine what the Word shows.

- What does this passage teach us about God?
- What does this passage teach us about humanity?
- What is wrong with the world and how does it treat believers?
- What is sin? What is guilt? What is hate? What is the source of all of those things?
- What is the meaning of 'A servant is not greater than his master?'
- What is the meaning of 'They hated me without cause?'
- Where do you see the Trinity in this passage? What is the role of each Person?
- What does it mean to bear witness?
- How will the disciples bear witness to Jesus after His resurrection?
- What role do the 'words' of Jesus play in the conscious of people?
- Read the first half of this chapter. What do you learn from these verses regarding joy, love, and bearing fruit? Why has God chosen you?
- What does it mean to abide and remain in the love of the God?

OBSERVATION

HEART

These questions help us wrestle with what we believe.

- Have you ever experienced animosity and antipathy from the world's system? What did that feel and look like? How did you respond? What would you do differently?
- How are you living NOT of this world? Are there areas of your life that are confusing regarding your loyalty and love of Jesus? Areas that are complicated or could become compromised?
- Is knowing that you will experience persecution from the world because of your unity with Jesus difficult or reassuring? Explain.
- What is the Holy Spirit's role in truth, persecution, protection, and goodness?
- REMEMBER: You were once the persecutor. You sent Jesus to the cross. Yet, He responded with mercy and grace for you. How can you do that in the mist of your hostility or trial?

INTERPRETATION

HANDS

These questions help us bring truth and beliefs into everyday realities.

- Suffering fixes your gaze on Jesus! Are you allowing suffering to complete its work? How are you currently allowing God to redeem your deceitful heart? Where do you need the Gospel for yourself and then for others?
- How can you bear witness for Jesus today?
- Is there a specific area of your life that the example of Jesus can be your example? Entrust yourself to the Lord and His shepherding of your life.
- How can we love one another and bear eternal fruit in our thoughts, attitudes and behavior?
- Read I Peter 3-5 or II Peter this week. What does that teach you regarding suffering?
- How does this passage help you to move from darkness to light?
- What encouragement do you receive knowing that this took place just hours before the cross and the source of our redemption?

APPLICATION

Close in Prayer

Bring to God the ideas and topics that you raised in the above questions. Listen to the Spirit as you pray.

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WEEK 4: MARCH 21, 2021

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

BEFORE GROUP STARTS — YOUR ROLE:

Read through the curriculum and discussion passages. Be aware of what God is showing you personally. Pray for your group members. What do you see God doing in each of them? What is God's part and what is your part as you walk with them? Psalm 119:18, "Open my eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of your law."

WELCOME: (Share a meal, snack, ice-breaker, game or story)

OPEN IN PRAYER

VISION CAST:

Help everyone grow in their relationship with God and others. Remind everyone that spiritual maturity is growing into the image of Jesus and bearing the fruit of the Spirit. Encourage everyone to grow in community, to reach out to one another and others through service and the daily rhythms of life. Galatians 5:22-23, "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law."

LIFE GROUP GUIDELINES:

You don't need to read this every week but initially, when someone new comes, and when the series or topic changes is a good time to reorient yourselves to the guidelines. This helps set the tone for the group and helps everyone have clear expectations for each other.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

See the weekly email, bulletin, or website and choose the top 2-3 connections that would benefit your group. Also use this time to give any connections that are specific to your Life Group.

FOLLOW UP & WARM UP:

- *What are you thankful for today? How did last time's discussion impact your week? Where did you step out in obedience this past week? What did you take away from the sermon?*
- *Share a youtube video or story that always seems to make you laugh. Is it a SNL skit or animal video? Funny family video or someone getting hurt? There is nothing so refreshing as a good hearty laugh.*
- *Share a story about yourself that no one knows. A memory growing up, recent recurring dream, something that makes you cringe or your most peaceful moment of each day. Know one another!*

SERIES THEME: From Darkness to Light

WEEK 5: *United in Light*

TEXT: John 17:13-26

13 But now I am coming to you, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves. **14** I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. **15** I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one. **16** They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. **17** Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. **18** As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. **19** And for their sake I consecrate myself, that they also may be sanctified in truth. **20** "I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, **21** that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. **22** The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, **23** I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me. **24** Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world. **25** O righteous Father, even though the world does not know you, I know you, and these know that you have sent me. **26** I made known to them your name, and I will continue to make it known, that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them."

TELL THE STORY: Read John 17:13-26

DEBRIEF THE STORY:

Spend time explaining the passage again in your own words. (The meaning of the author's terms, structure, literary form, and atmosphere.)

HEAD

These questions help us to examine what the Word shows.

- What does this passage teach us about the heart of Jesus?
- What does this passage teach us about humanity?
- What does this passage teach us about prayer, the world, the evil one, glory and truth?
- Describe the relationship between Father and Son from this passage.
- What does sanctify mean and what does verse 17 teach us?
- How does Jesus send us into the world like He was sent?
- What does consecration mean and what is our role in the process? (also see Romans 12:1-2)
- Jesus is praying for YOU in verse 20 and following! What stands out to you?
- Why are unity and glory so important to Jesus and for us?
- What is the impact of being ONE? What does the world see? Does this mean perfection?
- Do you sense the urgency and intensity in Jesus' prayer? What words point to this?
- What is the context of this passage? How much longer till Jesus' arrest and the disciples being scattered? Is this Jesus' final prayer?

OBSERVATION

HEART

These questions help us wrestle with what we believe.

- How is your prayer life? How important is it to you? What answered prayers have you received lately? How have you grown in intimacy with Jesus through prayer?
- How much do you plan and pray for unity for your friends and family? How would you go about teaching unity to everyone?
- What unity can come from a singular truth or creed? (take time to look up the Nicene Creed which was the rule of faith for the church its first 1,000 years)
- How do you handle rejection and persecution? When does hatred seem most overwhelming?
- How do you handle disunity? Here are some passages to read for restoration: Matthew 18:15-20 if someone sinned against you, Galatians 6:1-5 for restoring someone, Colossians 3:12-13 for forgiving someone, Matthew 5:23-26 for reconciling differences.

INTERPRETATION

HANDS

These questions help us bring truth and beliefs into everyday realities.

- Some people use the acronym PRAY as a guide for their time with God. Praise, Repent, Ask, Yield. Others have used ACTS which is Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving and Supplication. Would that be helpful for you? How do you keep your prayers authentic, fresh, varied, and complete? Having a certain place and time is always beneficial to forming a Godly habit.
- Practice praying Scripture! You could use this passage to literally pray vs. 17-25. Ask God to sanctify us, keep us one, receive His glory, and share His love. Remember, God wants to spend time with YOU.
- Focus on one takeaway from this passage. What is God impressing upon you to say/believe/do differently in your life?
- Read the next couple of chapters as you celebrate Palm Sunday and prepare for EASTER!

APPLICATION

Close in Prayer

Bring to God the ideas and topics that you raised in the above questions. Listen to the Spirit as you pray.

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BEFORE GROUP STARTS — YOUR ROLE:

Read through the curriculum and discussion passages. Be aware of what God is showing you personally. Pray for your group members. What do you see God doing in each of them? What is God's part and what is your part as you walk with them? Psalm 119:18, "Open my eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of your law."

WELCOME: (Share a meal, snack, ice-breaker, game or story)

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ANNOUNCEMENTS:

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FOLLOW UP & WARM UP:

- *What are you thankful for today? How did last time's discussion impact your week? Where did you step out in obedience this past week? What did you take away from the sermon?*
- *What is your favorite Easter Song? (An old hymn...The Old Rugged Cross, He is Risen, Up From the Grave He Arose, He is Alive, etc... or something contemporary, From Graves to Gardens, Resurrecting, Rise Up (Lazarus), Still Rolling Stones, or just buy the album Resurrection Letters Vol. 1 by Andrew Peterson?) Sing a song together!*
- *Have you ever been to a Living Hope Easter Sunrise Service? 6:30 AM across the street...dress warm and let the world know! He is Risen, He is Risen Indeed and returning! Share your experience if you have ever gone to a sunrise service.*

SERIES THEME: From Darkness to Light**WEEK 6: *When Light Laughed*****TEXT: John 20:1-18**

20 Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb. **2** So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, “They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him.” **3** So Peter went out with the other disciple, and they were going toward the tomb. **4** Both of them were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. **5** And stooping to look in, he saw the linen cloths lying there, but he did not go in. **6** Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen cloths lying there, **7** and the face cloth, which had been on Jesus’ head, not lying with the linen cloths but folded up in a place by itself. **8** Then the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; **9** for as yet they did not understand the Scripture, that he must rise from the dead. **10** Then the disciples went back to their homes.

11 But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb, and as she wept she stooped to look into the tomb. **12** And she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had lain, one at the head and one at the feet. **13** They said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping?” She said to them, “They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him.” **14** Having said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing, but she did not know that it was Jesus. **15** Jesus said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?” Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, “Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away.” **16** Jesus said to her, “Mary.” She turned and said to him in Aramaic, “Rabboni!” (which means Teacher). **17** Jesus said to her, “Do not cling to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to my brothers and say to them, ‘I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.’” **18** Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, “I have seen the Lord”—and that he had said these things to her.

TELL THE STORY: Read John 20:1-18

DEBRIEF THE STORY:

Spend time explaining the passage again in your own words. (The meaning of the author’s terms, structure, literary form, and atmosphere.)

HEAD

These questions help us to examine what the Word shows.

- What does this passage teach us about God? Resurrected Jesus?
- What does this passage teach us about humanity?
- What day is the first day of the week? Who is Mary Magdalene?
- What moved the stone away from the tomb?
- Who were the two disciples who showed up at the tomb?
- What is the significance of the linen cloth still being there and the face cloth being folded up?
- What were the disciples thinking after visiting the tomb? Where was Jesus?
- What were the two angels like? Where else do we see angels in this resurrected story?
- When did Mary realize that the 'gardener' was not who he seemed? What was her reaction?
- Jesus' words to Mary in verse 17 are supremely important, Who is now God to her? Jesus?

OBSERVATION

HEART

These questions help us wrestle with what we believe.

- How would you have reacted if you saw the Risen Lord?
- What do you think the ladies were hoping to find at the tomb?
- What is the significance of Jesus appearing first to Mary?
- Who do you think folded up the face cloth? For what reason?
- Would you have entered the tomb or remained outside? Where could the body have possibly gone? What would hiding the body of Jesus have required?
- Where in Scripture did it say that Jesus would rise from the dead?
- How important is the resurrection to Christianity? Your faith? The church? (Read I Cor. 15)
- Why did Jesus need to die and rise again? What is His victory?
- Why do you think no one witnessed the resurrection?
- How was Jesus' resurrected body different than His first body? What does that mean for YOU?
- Do you still doubt the resurrection of Jesus? Explain. What would help you believe?
- What is stopping you from sharing the Good News of Jesus?

INTERPRETATION

HANDS

These questions help us bring truth and beliefs into everyday realities.

- He is Alive! Who do you know that needs to hear this news?
- Read the rest of Chapter 20 and 21. What is the purpose of this Story? (20:30-31)
- Focus on one takeaway from this passage. What is God impressing upon you to say/believe/do differently in your life?
- Put away the chocolate and eggs for a moment. Praise the Lord for His Light and Life! Celebrate! Make a toast, hug a family member, write a prayer of thanks, give God glory!
- Think about your first visit with Jesus. Plan it. What would you like to say or do?
- I John 4:9-11 This is LOVE! Read it, Know it & Live it!
- Thank You Jesus for dying for ME. I praise YOU, JESUS, for saving ME. Come, Lord Jesus!!

APPLICATION

Close in Prayer

Bring to God the ideas and topics that you raised in the above questions. Listen to the Spirit as you pray.

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[illegible]

LIFE GROUP



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